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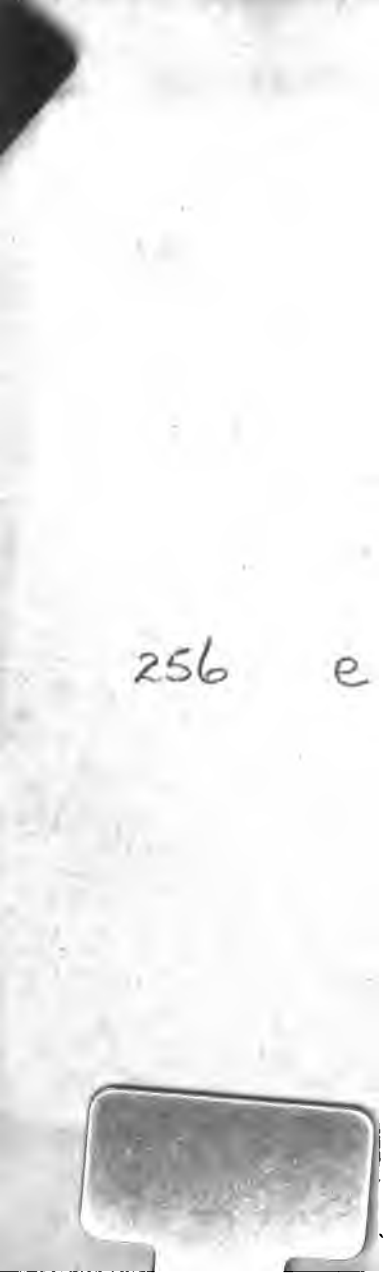

TRANSLATION
OF THE
LETTERS
of a
HINDOO RAJA:
WRITTEN
Previous to, and during the period of his Residence in England.

To which is Prefixed a
Preliminary Dissertation
on the
HISTORY, RELIGION, AND MANNERS,
of the
HINDOOS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY *Elizabeth Hamilton.*

Authoress of Memoirs of Modern Philosophers.

The second Edition.
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LETTERS

OF A

HINDOO RAJAH.

LETTER XI.

From the RAJAH ZAARMILLA, *to* MAANDAARA.

PRAISE to Varuna! under the guidance of whoſe potent arm, behold thy friend, ſurrounded by the billows of the mighty ocean.

The moſt ſublime objects alone preſent themſelves to my view. *Above* is the azure canopy of Heaven, in which "the "gold-crowned Sultan of the firmament, "advances the ſtandard of his bright-"neſs;" and without rival or competitor, enjoys the ſolitary grandeur of imperial ſtate. *Below* is the boundleſs expanſe of waters, the congregated waves of which, like the chiefs of ſome great republic, alternately riſe into the majeſty of power, and retire into the peace of obſcurity.

From the benevolence and friendſhip of captain Grey, I received every aſſiſtance in preparing for my voyage, and procured every neceſſary that could tend to its comfort. I have alſo from him Letters of introduction to his friends, with a ſketch of the character of each, ſo that I ſhall have the advantage of a ſort of pre-acquintance in a land of ſtrangers. From Morton, I have received letters for his mother, and ſiſters, accompanied by ſome valuable preſents, which the generous hand of Grey, enabled him to procure for them.

The young man has made a rapid progreſs in my eſteem: his mind ſeems formed for the reſidence of virtue; nor is there any reaſon to apprehend that the headſtrong paſſions of youth will ever be able to drive her from her ſeat.

I have not forgotten the ſiſter of my friend, the long lamented Percy. For her I have made a ſelection of whatever I thought could be acceptable: and the idea of preſenting it in perſon, affords great delight to my mind,—Jeo-doſs, to whom, as well as to my other ſervants, I gave the liberty of returning to Kuttaher, ſo earneſtly entreated for leave to accompany me, that I conſented; and alſo at their own deſire have kept two more of my own people, all of whoſe

ſervices I find very uſeful to me in this floating caſtle; where, in ſpite of every precaution, I confeſs, many things occur, diſguſting to delicacy, and abhorrent to the nice feelings of propriety.

I was accompanied to the ſhip by Grey, Morton, and ſome other friends, who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their particular kindneſs to me. Even Cooper, wild and eccentric as he is, would not ſufferr me to depart without ſome token of his kindneſs. He brought me a cap lined with the fineſt fur, which he told me would be of ſervice in the cold climate I was about to encounter.

The pang of regret penetrated my heart, when I bade the laſt farewell to theſe amiable friends; but when the ſhip was put in motion, and I ſaw thoſe bleſt ſhores, "the favoured ſeats of the Gods of India," recede from my ſight, my heart grew faint within me, and all my philoſophy was inſufficient to re-invigorate my ſinking courage.

Sickneſs in a ſhort time took from me the power of thinking. I have ſuffered under it ſo ſeverely, that I have hitherto been unable to enjoy the ſociety of my fellow paſſengers, the female part of whom are ſtill confined to their apartments, by the cruel effects of this ſea nauſea, the moſt intolerable of all diſeaſes! Upon the

quarter-deck, I have met the huſband of one of theſe ladies, who was - - - - of - - -, in which ſtation he acquired a fortune, which though not the tenth of the ſum that a Muſſulman Dewan would have acquired, will, I am told be ſufficient to give him diſtinction in his own country. The Commander of the ſhip, though among his men he appears like a lion of the foreſt, is to his paſſengers gentle as the deer of the mountain. I have already been much indebted to his politeneſs and civility. I have the ſame acknowledgment to make to the Surgeon, a young man, whoſe quick, and penetrating eye gives the promiſe of genius, and diſcernment.

Time, that great Phyſician, having in ſome degree reconciled our ſtomachs to the motion of the veſſel, I have had the pleaſure of being introduced to the fair companions of our voyage; who are three in number.

The firſt, is the wife of the Dewan; her features are regular, but ſo inſipid, that I ſhould not fail to pronounce her equally void of ſenſe and feeling, was it not for the unlimited affection ſhe evinces towards the animal creation, which ſhe carries to as exalted a height as any Hermit of Cummow. Surrounded by Parrots, Lorys, Maccaws, ſmall Dogs, Perſian

Cats, and Monkeys of every deſcription, ſhe ſeems attracted towards them by a myſterious ſympathy; while if her languid eyes are caſt towards any of the company, it is only to expreſs the language of diſdain.

Notwithſtanding my admiration of this amiable protectreſs of the brute creation, I cannot help feeling a ſuperior degree of pleaſure, in contemplating the unaffected charms, and unaſſuming lovelineſs of a young widow; the beauty of whoſe countenance is ſhaded, though not concealed, by the veil of ſorrow. Whilſt beſtowing on her fatherleſs babes the ſoft careſſes of maternal tenderneſs, I have obſerved the tear which gliſtened on the ſilken fringe of her fine black eyes, mingled with the ſmiles of tender complacency.

Betwixt this Lady and her huſband, at an early period of life, a mutual attachment had taken place. Prudence could not at that time ſanction their union: for in a country where luxury has fixed her reſidence, it becomes difficult to procure the neceſſaries of exiſtence, and without theſe, how would a man anſwer the calls of an infant family? The affection of theſe lovers, at length triumphed over every difficulty; the gentleman went to India, where, in proceſs of time, he was promoted to the ----- of --- and no ſooner found himſelf in a ſituation

to ſupport a family, than he claimed the promiſe of his betrothed bride, who, throwing aſide the timidity of her ſex, and unprotected, ſave by the modeſt dignity of virtue, nobly braved the inconveniences and hazards of an Indian voyage. She was received with tranſport by her anxiouſly expecting lover, whoſe happineſs was completed by their immediate union. Their's was not that tranſient glow of joy, which, like the crimſon-tinted cloud of morning, vaniſhes while gazed on; it was permanent as pure. Each met in each the enlightened companion, the wiſe adviſer, the faithful friend. But, alas! while fondly looking forward to a long period of felicity, the ſtroke of death, ſuddenly deſtroyed the fair, but fallacious proſpect. You will, perhaps, think but indifferently of her, who in ſuch circumſtances, would perſevere in preſerving life:—But it is the cuſtom of her nation! And ſhe perhaps imagines, that ſhe may as effectually evince her regard to the memory of her huſband, by devoting herſelf to the care and education of his children, as if ſhe had mingled her aſhes with his.

Three fine boys look up to her for protection, and already begin to benefit by her inſtructions. Their innocent vivacity, though a ſource of amuſement

to moſt of the party, is a great annoyance to the monkey-loving Bibby, who declares, that "of all the odious tor-"ments of a long voyage, that of being "teized with the noiſe of children is the "worſt." At the ſound of her voice, the diſſonant ſcreams of her feathered favourites, ſeem to ratify the declaration of their fair benefactreſs; whilſt the young and lively niece of the Dewan, caſts towards the many-coloured objects of her aunt's affection, ſuch an expreſſive glance, as ſeems to ſay, they are *almoſt* as bad.

Of this young lady I can ſay little, but that ſhe appears gay, and good humoured. The Surgeon, indeed, from whom I have all my information reſpecting my fellow voyagers, tells me, that ſhe had been brought to India by her uncle, in order to be married to the gentleman, who was to ſucceed him in his appointment; but that on the voyage from Europe, a mutual affection had taken place between her, and a young votary of Laekſhmi *, who muſt obtain the ſmiles of the Goddeſs, before he can procure the hand of his miſtreſs. Her uncle, in the mean while, inſiſts on her return to Europe; and from the hilarity of her countenance, I ſhould not ſuppoſe the diſappointment to have entered deeply into her heart.

* Fortune.

A ſad buſtle has juſt taken place. One of the little boys having been allured into the great cabbin, by the comical tricks of a Marmozet, was attacked by a huge Baboon, one of the fierceſt animals in Mrs. ----'s collection. His cries ſoon gave the alarm; every one flew to the place from whence they iſſued. No deſcription can give any idea of the confuſed ſcene which followed. The voice of the ſufferer, was ſoon loſt in univerſal uproar. The ſcreams of the ladies, the chattering of the monkeys, the barking of the dogs, to ſay nothing of the ſqualling of the parrots and maccaws, made altogether, ſuch a noiſe, that the thunder of the contending elements could ſcarcely have been heard in it. When peace was at length reſtored, and the little boy, whoſe leg was ſadly torn, had been committed to the care of the ſurgeon, the Dewan ventured to remonſtrate with his fair partner, on the numbers, and bad behaviour of her favourites. It was a tender point; the very mention of it, though managed with the utmoſt gentleneſs, threw her into a paroxyſm of anger, which at length terminated in a flood of tears. In truth, there appeared to me in theſe tears, ſo much more of paſſion than of tenderneſs, that I could not regard

them as any ornament to the cheek of beauty! Perhaps you may blame my inſenſibility, and beſtow more unbounded admiration on this benevolent woman, who generouſly prefers the welfare and happineſs of her tailed, and feathered favourites, to the peace and comfort of her huſband; and whoſe heart expands, with more lively affection, for the meaneſt quadruped in her poſſeſſion, than for the orphan child of any friend on earth.

Intelligence is juſt brought me of our having caſt anchor in the road of Madraſs. —I will from thence ſend you this letter. May it find you in the poſſeſſion of the beſt bleſſings of life, health, and tranquillity! What can I ſay more?

LETTER XII.

THE day after I concluded my epiſtle from Madraſs *, we returned on board our ſhip, and the morning following weighed anchor, and proceeded on our voyage, in company with many floating fortreſſes of ſuperior ſize, ſent by the king of England, to protect the fleet of the Company. The gentleman who I mentioned to you in my laſt, proves indeed a valuable acquiſition to our ſociety.

* Which letter does not appear—and is ſuppoſed by the Editor to have been loſt.

He, alas! returns to his country, *not* loaded with the riches of India, but poſſeſſing in his mind a treaſure, more deſirable than any wealth can purchaſe. It is from the ſneer of worthleſs proſperity, from the contumely of ſucceſsful pride, that Mr. Delomond goes to hide his misfortunes in the oblivious ſhade of retirement. "When the frowns of fortune are ex- "ceſſive, and human endeavours are ex- "erted in vain, where but in the wilder- "neſs can comfort be found for a man of "ſenſibility?" Such an one is Delomond; unable to ſtruggle with the tempeſtuous gales of adverſe fortune, he declines the conteſt. The pride of talents, and the conſciouſneſs of rectitude, may, he thinks, ſupport him in his ſolitude; though he has found, from his experience, that they are often an obſtacle to advancement in the world: the path that leads to fortune, too often paſſing through the narrow defiles of meanneſs, which a man of an exalted ſpirit cannot ſtoop to tread.

The manly elegance with which Nature has endowed this Saib, together with an air of dignity which marks his whole deportment, commands the admiration of the whole party; even the lady of the Dewan, relaxing from the haughty languor of her uſual manner, condeſcends to addreſs him with the ut-

moſt civility: and though her miſtake as to his being *a man of fortune*, which from his appearance ſhe had naturally concluded him to be, was ſoon rectified, ſhe could not diveſt herſelf of the reſpectful deference which his manifeſt ſuperiority ſo juſtly claims. She ſometimes, indeed, when he is not preſent, wonders what people of *no fortune* mean, by aſſuming the airs of quality?

In the converſation of Delomond and the beautiful widow, I have ſpent many delightful hours. The firſt poſſeſſes a rich mine of knowledge, from which I expect pure and genuine information. The latter is not leſs ſenſible, almoſt equally well informed, more lively in her ideas, and more quick in her diſcernment; but, at the ſame time ſo modeſt, and unaffuming is this lovely woman, that I am ſometimes at a loſs which to admire moſt—the perfection of her underſtanding, or her unconſciouſneſs of its ſuperiority.

The indiſpoſition of theſe two intelligent companions, has for ſome days paſt deprived me of their ſociety; and I ſhould have been at a great loſs how to diſpoſe of myſelf, had it not been for the goodneſs of the niece of the Dewan, who from her own library ſupplied me, with a fund of inſtruction and amuſement.

The young lady I have lately diſcovered to be a great lover of books; of which ſhe has by far the moſt numerous collection of any perſon on board. But it is not ſurpriſing, that I ſhould never have ſuſpected her taſte for literature. No one could poſſibly find it out from her converſation, which always turns upon the moſt trifling ſubjects. Notwithſtanding the knowledge ſhe muſt doubtleſs have acquired from the number of books ſhe has read, ſhe is ſo modeſt as never to utter a ſentiment beyond vulgar obſervation, nor to attempt making uſe of her reaſon upon any occaſion whatever; ſo that a perſon might eaſily believe her mind to be ſtill immerſed in the depths of ignorance.

In the valuable collection of Biography, which this young lady kindly ſubmitted to my peruſal, the firſt book that attracted my attention, was "the *Hiſtory of a Nobleman*;" but I ſoon found, that the word *Hiſtory* has more meanings in the Engliſh language, than that which is given to it in the Dictionary. It is *there* ſaid to be, "a narrative of events and facts, delivered with dignity." But the hiſtory of this illuſtrious nobleman, conſiſted of nothing more than a few letters written in the days of juvenile folly, on the ſubject of love!—Indeed, I cannot imagine why ſuch immature productions

ſhould have been preſerved at all; and ſtill leſs can I conceive for what purpoſe they are given to the world, to whom, the opinion which a young man entertains of the unparalleled beauty of his miſtreſs's complexion, can ſurely be of very little conſequence. Other hiſtories I found written in the manner of Memoirs; theſe are ſaid to contain the lives of illuſtrious perſonages, whoſe names adorn the title page. It appears very ſtrange, that the lives of theſe great perſonages ſhould abound in incidents ſo ſimilar; an account of one will ſerve to give you an idea of the events that have occurred in fifty families, whoſe hiſtories I have already read.

It happens, that a noble born infant is deſerted by its fond parents, and expoſed to the care of chance, and the humanity of ſtrangers. Theſe fortunate foundlings never fail to be adopted by the firſt perſon who takes them up, and as theſe are always people of fortune, they receive from their bounty an education, every way ſuitable to their *real* rank. As ſoon as the young nobleman attains the age of manhood, he falls in love with the daughter of his benefactor, a circumſtance which involves the loving pair in the deepeſt miſery. At length, a period is put to their misfortunes, by the diſco-

very of the *real* parents, and the young lord is admitted to all the privileges of his order. You may now perhaps expect that the *hiſtory* ſhould become more intereſting and important, and be curious to hear how the young nobleman conducts himſelf in his new ſtation; whether the experience he has had of life, ſerves to expand his benevolence, to invigorate his intellectual powers, and to render him a more worthy member of that auguſt tribunal, in which is concentrated the illuſtrious maſs of hereditary virtue? As to all theſe points, you muſt content yourſelf to remain in ignorance; with the marriage of the hero, the *hiſtory* of his life concludes!

From this circumſtance, and, indeed, from the whole tenor of the books, it appears evident, that with theſe iſlanders, marriage is a certain paſſport to never failing, and never fading bliſs! A ſtate near reſembling that divine abſorption of the ſoul deſcribed by our Yogees, which entirely excludes the cares and concerns of life, and in which the mind is wrapt in a delirium of perfect and uninterrrupted felicity!—Happy country! where the prudence and fidelity of the women of high rank, ſo plainly evince the care that is beſtowed on their inſtruction, and where the piety, learning, and

morality of the men, is only to be equalled by their humility!

I will not conceal from you, that in theſe true and faithful pictures of the manners and morals of the people of England, I ſee much that appears to me extraordinary, and incomprehenſible. Here, it is ſaid by our philoſophers, that, " in this life (compounded of good and evil) *ſickneſs, and health; opulence, and calamity; fruition, and diſappointment, are bound up together; *thus every thing is produced with a companion which ſhall deſtroy it.* By this ſcheme of things, the wounds of affliction are ever within the reach of ſome cordial balm, which, if it does not heal, may at leaſt ſerve to alleviate its anguiſh. While, in the pureſt cup of felicity, is mingled ſuch particles, as may ſerve to remind the mortal to whom it is preſented, of the ſublunary ſource from whence it flowed.—In England, on the contrary (if I am to believe theſe hiſtories) happineſs and miſery are known only in extremes; there the tide of adverſity ſets in with ſuch deſtructive fury, that the bare recital of the unheard-of calamities, it occaſions, is ſufficient to melt the hardeſt heart! Nor when the flood of fortune comes, is

* Heetopades.

the torrent of prosperity which it produces, less extraordinary and amazing! In its resistless career, every barrier to happiness is broken down. The undeserving husband, the cruel father, and the malicious aunt, are all carried off by death; while riches, honours, titles, fine clothes, and spotless character, complete the felicity of the beautiful and loving pair, who are designed to be overwhelmed in this sea of bliss.

From the authority of these *authentic memoirs*, it appears, that marriage in Europe is never contracted but from the most pure and disinterested motives. Every young woman who is handsome and accomplished, however humble her birth, or small her fortune, is there certain of attracting the love and admiration of numbers of the highest rank in the community. What a glorious encouragement is held forth to the females of that happy island, who must be blind indeed not to perceive that it is their own *obstinacy* and *folly*, that alone can possibly prevent their advancement to the very summit of felicity!

For such folly and obstinacy, whenever it occurs, a very peculiar and extraordinary punishment is reserved. After a few years, spent, as it is generally believed, in vain repentance, and useless re-

gret, they all at once, without any exceptions in favour of virtue, merit, useful or ornamental accomplishments, undergo a certain change, and incomprehensible transformation, and become what is termed OLD MAIDS. From all that I have hitherto been able to learn of these creatures, the Old Maid is a sort of venemous animal, so wicked in its temper, and so mischievous in its disposition, that one is surprised that its very existence should be tolerated in a civilized society.

After having spent many days in the study of those authors, so warmly recommended by the young Bibby, I began to apprehend that though to more enlightened minds, they might doubtless prove a source of instruction and delight, they were not sufficiently adapted to my weak capacity, to afford any recompence for the time spent in their perusal. Never before did my heart refuse its sympathy to human misery; but the distresses of the Lady Hariots, and the Lady Charlottes, which called forth the overflowings of compassion, in the breasts of their fair correspondents, were of a nature too refined and delicate, to be discernable to any save the Microscopic eye of European sensibility!

The change which according to these sage writers of Novels, has taken place in human nature, must have been as sudden as it appears unaccountable. In the days of their great Dramatic Poet, *the Calidas of Europe*, it was certainly unknown; in his masterly delineations of the passions, it is every where, and at every period the same: and from a perusal of his works, one would be tempted to imagine (notwithstanding the evidence of these *authentic memoirs* to the contrary) that though manners may differ, and local customs fall into oblivion, the traits of kindred likeness, which the Creator has been pleased to impress on the great family of the human race, may, by a discerning eye, be traced through every clime, and in every period of its existence! How otherwise should the immortal Calidas, who flourished two thousand years ago *, and the Bard of Eng-

* Calidas, the celebrated dramatic poet of India, flourished, according to Sir William Jones, in the first century before Christ; he was one of the nine men of genius, commonly called the *Nine Gems*, who were favoured with the patronage and splendidly supported by the bounty of Vicramadityes, a Monarch eminently distinguished by his taste for literature.

(See the preface to Sir William Jones's translation of *Sacontala.*)

land, who was cotemporary with Ackbar, teach the heart to vibrate with the ſame ſenſations? The Sacontala of the one, and the Deſdemona of the other, ſpeak ſo nearly the ſame language, that, did I not believe the ſoul of the Indian poet to have been long abſorbed in the regions of felicity, I ſhould undoubtedly imagine, that it was Calidas himſelf, who, under the name of Shakſpeare, again vouchſafed to enlighten and delight the world!—It is at leaſt evident that they have both copied from the ſame original—*Unchanging, everlaſting Nature!*

A chaſm of many weeks has taken place in my journal. Alas! When I undertook to write it, I was not aware of the tedious uniformity of a ſea voyage. But though void of incident, the ſcene has not been deſtitute of inſtruction. By time, and increaſing intimacy, the characters of my companions have been more fully developed. The firſt ſketch that was drawn by the haſty pencil of imagination, I confidently pronounced to be a ſtriking likeneſs; but very different now appears the picture, that has been delineated by ſlow-working obſervation.

In my letter from Madraſs *, I informed you of the acquiſition I expected from

* This letter is not to be found.

the ſociety of the young officer, whoſe ſprightly manners, and communicative diſpoſition, gave the promiſe of an ever-pleaſing companion. But, alas! I ſoon diſcovered that ſprightlineſs and loquacity are by no means united with urbanity and cheerfulneſs.—The ſmall ſtock of perſonal anecdote, with which the incidents of his life had furniſhed him, was no ſooner exhauſted, than he became dull, inſipid, and moroſe. Nor was the change which ſeemed wrought on his temper, leſs extraordinary, than that which took place in his manners. This youth, ſeemingly ſo gentle; who took ſuch pleaſure in obliging; who lived but to promote the happineſs of others, gives every day ſuch convincing proofs of the malignity of his diſpoſition, in the cruel treatment he beſtows upon his younger brother, that it is impoſſible to behold it without feelings of horror, and indignation.

How different from this, is the change that has taken place in my opinion, concerning the character of the Dewan. Alas! I fear, that in more inſtances than theſe, my firſt opinion has been like an unjuſt judge, who ſuffers his deciſions to be influenced by the eloquence of flattery. Self-love, whiſpers that thoſe who are pleaſed with us, are pleaſing; and it

is not till experience has convinced us of our error, that we are willing to liſten to the voice of truth. The reſerve, and ſilence which at firſt ſeemed to give to the character of the Dewan an appearance of ſullenneſs and ſtupidity, gradually cleared away, by time and encreaſing intimacy, and diſcovered to us inconteſtable proofs of a mild and placid temper, a deeply-thinking, well-informed mind, and a humane and benevolent heart.

The conduct of his Lady, has not, I confeſs, undergone much change; but my opinion of it has been ſomewhat altered, by an inſight into its motives.

That haughty, and arrogant demeanour, which I had conceived to flow from the conſcious ſuperiority of birth and merit, was, it ſeems, aſſumed by folly, to conceal the real meanneſs of both. Her hiſtory appeared to me ſo very extraordinary, that had I not had the moſt convincing proofs of the veracity of my informer, I confeſs, I ſhould have been led to doubt its truth.

This diſdainful Lady, whom I had conſidered as ſome highly exalted perſonage, was the daughter of a tradeſman, " whoſe fooliſh fondneſs, ſaid the Surgeon," (for I give you his very words) " beſtowed upon her ſuch an education, as, without inſtructing her in the qualities

that are alone suited to adorn an exalted rank, rendered her unfit for becoming wife to a man in her own. At the death of this parent, she laid out the small fortune he bequeathed her, in fine cloaths, and took her passage to Bengal, where she did not doubt that her beauty would procure her an advantageous marriage. The event proved equal to her expectations. On her arrival, she was seen by the Dewan, who admired, courted, and married her!" "And thought" said I, interrupting my informer, "that Europeans had made companions of their wives. Surely, this woman was not qualified for being the companion of such a man as the Dewan. It is not possible to imagine, that her intellectual deficiencies, would be unobserved by a man of his sense and penetration." "The Dewan was too much charmed with her beauty, to observe any deficiency in her merit," replied the Surgeon; "or, if he did, she was so young, that he promised himself so much pleasure in filling the office of Preceptor." Alas! he considered not that pride is the usual concomitant of ignorance; that it is not the understanding which has been perverted by vanity, prejudice, and folly, that will listen to the instructions of a husband.

Her hopes of happineſs were from the enjoyment of his fortune.

"Elated by her exaltation to affluence, ſhe thought that to realize the dreams of bliſs, formed by her fond fancy, ſhe had only to indulge in every capricious whim of vanity. Her extravagance was unbounded. But ſoon ſhe found that it was not in the power of ſplendid equipage, or fantaſtic finery, to fill the chaſm of an empty mind.

"The delight of unrivalled pre-eminence in every article of expenſive ornament, ſoon gave place to ſullen apathy, and fretful diſcontent. New follies were invented, and purſued with no better ſucceſs, and it will perhaps, aſtoniſh you, to learn, that her mighty fondneſs for the brute creation, inſtead of proceeding from the pure ſource of true benevolence, was in reality, no other than an effort of the animal ſpirits, to procure an object of employment to her ever reſtleſs mind."

Here ceaſed my kind informer; who left me very much aſtoniſhed, at the picture he had drawn of an Engliſh woman, and a Chriſtian.

After much reflection, I think I can trace the unenlightened ſtate of this woman's underſtanding, to her want of inſtruction. Had ſhe received her educa-

tion at one of thoſe wiſe, learned, and pious ſeminaries, called boarding-ſchools, her mind would no doubt have been vigilantly defended from the noxious breath of vanity and conceit. She would there have learned according to the precepts of her Shaſter, to have adorned herſelf with "ſhamefacedneſs and ſobriety." "Not with broidered hair, or gold, or "pearls, or coſtly array, but (which be-"cometh women poſſeſſing godlineſs) "with good works." Such, no doubt, is the education of *Chriſtian* women, at *Chriſtian* ſchools! How does it exalt my opinion of the native genius of the young widow; when I contemplate the extent of her acquired knowledge, her unaffected humility, her undeviating diſcretion; and at the ſame time, conſider, that by her own account, ſhe never enjoyed the advantages of inſtruction at one of theſe enlightened ſeminaries, but was confined during the early part of her life, to the roof of her parents! Is it not ſurpriſing, that, notwithſtanding this advantage, ſhe ſhould have made ſuch proficiency in every accompliſhment? My firſt ſentiments concerning her remain unaltered. Her exalted ſentiments continue to excite my admiration, while her ſweet temper, and ever obliging diſpoſition, make daily progreſs in my eſteem.

The morning after I laſt laid down my pen, we arrived at a ſmall iſland, which the benignant hand of nature ſeems to have (erected) in the midſt of the mighty ocean, as a convenient * Choultrie, for the floating caravanſeras that traverſe its watery boſom. Here we ſpent nearly twenty days, and were entertained by the inhabitants, who appear a gay and lively people, with much kindneſs and hoſpitality.

The change of the ſcene was reliſhed by all the party, but by none ſo much as the niece of the Dewan; to whom the uniform life we led on board ſhip, was become altogether inſupportable. She had indeed for a long time, been at a moſt pitiable loſs for employment. The contents of her library, which I imagined, would have afforded her a fund of amuſement and edification, during the courſe of her voyage, were ſoon exhauſted. Having once found out how all the wiſhed-for marriages, of all the heroes and heroines, were brought about; and been let into the ſecret of the ſurpriſing diſcoveries, lucky accidents, and miraculous combination of circumſtances, which uniformly led to that happy event, ſhe had

* Choultries, are houſes built in India, for the accommodation of travellers.

no further intereſt nor curioſity concerning them. Theſe books had, nevertheleſs, by giving conſtant fuel to the vivid flame of youthful imagination, created ſuch an inſatiable craving for novelty, as rendered every other ſort of reading taſteleſs and inſipid. Even the ever entertaining converſation of our intelligent companions, had no charms for her. I have frequently known the chain of an intereſting argument, to which I have been liſtening with avidity and delight, all at once interrupted, by her abruptly aſking, when we ſhould ſee land? Whatever gave the promiſe of variety, ſeemed to re-animate her flagging ſpirits. Whether it was the appearance of a flying-fiſh—or the rumoured approach of an enemy; the drowning of a kitten, or the indications of a coming ſtorm, all were equally acceptable; ſo that they relieved her, from the tedious taſk of thought. The approach to St. Helena, made her almoſt wild with joy. No ſooner was it announced, than ſhe flew to her cabin, to take from her trunk, ſome particular dreſſes, which ſhe had reſerved for the occaſion, and haſtily diſplaying them before the amiable widow, aſked her fifty queſtions in a breath concerning the important point, of which was moſt becoming.

Beſides the novelty of the ſcenes, and amuſements at St. Helena, ſhe there made another acquiſition, which, I hope, will afford her ſufficient variety of entertainment for many weeks to come. This is no other than a freſh ſupply of novels. This ſhe happily accompliſhed, by exchanging the contents of her library, with another *reading fair one*, whom ſhe accidentally met at a ball, and with whom, on an acquaintance of three days, ſhe commenced an *extreme* and *ardent* friendſhip. The great loquacity with which her preſent flow of ſpirits has inſpired this votary of fancy, is ſometimes no leſs teazing than the effects of her former ennui: to the elegant, but ſomewhat too faſtidious Delomond, it is peculiarly irkſome.

In truth, it is not a little to be regretted, that this amiable man frequently indulges a certain ſoreneſs of mind, which may not improperly be termed the illegitimate offspring of ſenſibility. What proves its ſpurious birth, is, that while genuine ſenſibility is ever alive to the feelings of others, this baſtard branch of the family, is only mindful of its own. By being ever ready to take offence, without conſidering whether offence was intended to be given, it frequently inflicts a wound in the boſom of friendſhip; but

is unfeelingly inſenſible to the pain which it has produced. What a pity it is, that this impoſtor, ſhould ever find a place in the breaſt of a worthy man! I cannot without pain, behold it cheriſhed by the dignified mind of Delomond, and would not fail to remonſtrate with him concerning it, was he not ſo *eaſily hurt*, that I fear an eſtrangement of his friendſhip might be the conſequence. Fatal propenſity! which preſents a barrier to the wholeſome ſuccour of advice, and cuts off retreat from error. In the various ſketches which this amiable and accompliſhed Saib, has given me of his life, and his misfortunes, I can plainly diſcern, that the diſpoſition I have juſt now alluded to, has been no leſs detrimental to his fortune, than injurious to his felicity.

I ſuſpect, that you are now almoſt as much tired of the voyage, as the niece of the Dewan, and begin to re-echo her interrogatory, of when ſhall we ſee land? But courage, keep up your ſpirits, your patience will not be put to a much longer trial.—Land has been juſt diſcovered from the topmaſt-head.—I cannot avoid envying the happy ſailor, who from the giddy height catches the firſt view of his dear native country. Ah! what pleaſing images play about his heart! in that little ſpeck

appearing in the diſtant horizon, he beholds his little home; his tender wife; his endearing infants; and already, in imagination, feels, and returns their ſoft careſſes. I go to participate in the joy of theſe honeſt people, it is a bad heart to which the *happineſs of a fellow mortal* can be indifferent.

Ah! Maandaara, how aſtoniſhingly great has been my diſappointment! Inſtead of the expected appearance of felicity, I beheld in the countenances of the hitherto hearty, and contented ſailors, the ſtrongeſt indications of conſternation, terror, and diſmay! On enquiring into the cauſe of this alarm, I was told, that it aroſe from the rumoured approach of a *preſs-gang*; a preſs-gang I never before heard of, but from the degree of terror it inſpires, I can eaſily conceive it be ſome infernal ſpecies of monſter; ſome cruel ſervant to the genii of the deep, to whom the long-abſent ſailor is an acceptable ſacrifice. Accurſed ſpirits! the terror of whoſe name, can put to flight the tender images of hope, and can induce deſpair at a moment when the ſweeteſt impulſes of nature have kindled the torch of joy!

At the moment I laid down my pen, a fine boy of about ſixteen years of age, who had frequently in the courſe of the

voyage, attracted my notice, burst into my cabin. "For the love of God, "assist me dear, dear Sir," cried he, "the press-gang are already here, and "I know, I shall not escape! For my-"self I should not care; but, my poor, "poor mother! she will never survive "it. I know she wont. Alas! she has "no son, but me.—Her heart is now "yearning to embrace me. O it will "break, if she is disappointed!" I gave him time to say no more, but having hastily emptied a large trunk, made him leap into it, and there detained him, until I was assured that these children of Nareyka had retired. Alas! they did not retire without prey; above thirty of those brave fellows, whose useful labours have conduced to the enrichment, and prosperity of their country; who, after an absence of twenty months, hopes to reap the reward of their toils, by returning to its bosom, were dragged reluctant victims to the infernal demon of power!

Nor are these the only monsters that infest the British coast.—Much apprehension is entertained by the seamen, and passengers, for certain savages, called *Custom-house Officers*; who, it seems, are particularly ferocious towards those who come from the East.

Praiſe to the preſerving Spirit!—Our watery pilgrimage begins to draw near its cloſe. At ten this morning, we caſt our anchor, at the diſtance of about one coſs from one of the principal Naval Ports in England. All on board is now hurry and confuſion, every eye ſparkles with the eagerneſs of expectation, and every heart ſeems warm, with the thoughts of once more beholding their friends, and their native country; it is the tumult of delight; the dread of the cuſtom houſe officers, is forgotten; I ſuppoſe our fleet was too formidable for theſe ſavages to dare to make any attack upon it. And now that we are within ſight of an Engliſh port, we can have nothing to fear. Seeing every one making preparations for going aſhore, I retired to ſpend an hour at my pen; but the encreaſing buſtle, renders it impoſſible for me to proceed further at preſent.

On going upon deck, I was ſurpriſed to obſerve a number of ſtrange faces, and anxiouſly enquired what kind friends had taken this early opportunity of greeting our arrival?—With aſtoniſhment, I learned, that the ſtrangers, were no other than the dreaded cuſtom-houſe officers. In manners, dreſs, ſtature, and complexion, nay even in language, theſe ſavages

bear ſo ſtrong a reſemblance to the Engliſh, that they might at a ſlight view, be miſtaken for the ſame; but, on a more accurate examination of their countenances, evident traces of their ſavage origin, may be eaſily diſcerned. They are leſs ferocious than the - - - -, and ſeldom murder thoſe who fall into their hands, unleſs in caſes of reſiſtance. This they did not meet with from any of us; but, got leave to rifle, rob and plunder, without any hindrance, or moleſtation. Their avidity for plunder, though eager beyond deſcription, ſeems to be acquired by the ſtrangeſt caprice. On the commodities of Europe they ſeemed to ſet no value; but ſeized with ſavage rapacity, on the more elegant productions of the Eaſt. In reſpect to theſe, the niece of the Dewan, and myſelf, have been the greateſt ſufferers. A beautiful piece of ſilver muſlin, which the fair reader of Novels, had treaſured up, as her choiceſt ornament, and on which, ſhe ſet a tenfold value, from its being of a ſimilar deſcription to that which was worn by the Right Hon. Lady Araminta Eleanora Bloomville, on the day of her nuptials; was ſeized by theſe relentleſs barbarians, without remorſe. With a copious flood of tears, ſhe beſought them to ſpare her favourite robe; but, alas! the ſupplica-

tions of beauty, touched not the heart of theſe ſavage plunderers, who beheld unmoved, the pearly drops, which courſed each other down the fair one's cheek! my cabin afforded a ſtill more ample ſhare of plunder. The ſhawls, the muſlins, which I intended to have preſented to the ſiſter of Percy: and the leſs coſtly, though in the eye of affection, no leſs valuable preſents, which the generoſity of Grey, had enabled young Morton to ſend his family? all, all, were ſeized, by the unhallowed hands of theſe ruthleſs ſpoilers! Had they taken my whole eheſt of gold Mhors, it would not have grieved me half ſo much! But, as it is a misfortune, for which I perceive there is no remedy, I muſt have recourſe to that only phyſic of the hopeleſs—Patience.

From the Queen of the ocean, the favoured Iſland of Great Britain, does the wandering Zaarmilla, now addreſs the moſt beloved of friends.—Having taken leave of the Captain and officers, and returned, well merited, thanks for their kind attention during our voyage; we went into a boat, which had been ſent from the harbour, for the conveyance of the paſſengers, and were quickly landed on one of the ghauts of Portſmouth; it is impoſſible to convey to your imagination, any notion of the magnificence of the

ſpectacle that preſented itſelf to our view, in this ſhort ſail. No idea of the ſublimity of a fleet of floating fortreſſes, can poſſibly be conceived by thoſe who have not beheld the unequalled ſcene. The army of the moſt powerful Monarch of the Eaſt, though numerous as the grains of ſand upon the ſhores of the ſea, the duſt of the feet of whoſe Elephants obſcures the noon-day ſun, cannot, in point of grandeur, bear compariſon with an aſſemblage of theſe glories of the ocean, that ride triumphant in an Engliſh port.

We have taken up our preſent abode at a ſort of Choultrie, called an Hotel, and are to ſpend the remainder of the day together. To-morrow, we ſhall ſeparate, perhaps, for ever! The lovely widow, in whoſe countenance, I ſee the emotions of tender recollections ſtruggling with that amiable fortitude, which ſtrives to repreſs the feeling of unavailing ſorrow, purpoſes going to the houſe of a friend, at a few miles diſtance from this place, and there to wait the arrival of her mother. I am to have the happineſs of Delomond's company, on my journey to London, which is a very great comfort to me, as I find myſelf almoſt as much at a loſs here, as if I had never before been in an Engliſh ſettlement. The Dewan has been buſily employed in

preparations for the conveyance of his family. His lady's extreme delicacy not permitting her to submit to the ordinary mode of travelling, in hired carriages, he has been obliged to purchase one for her accommodation. Happily, the mortality which prevailed among her favourites in the course of the voyage, has so much diminished their numbers, as to render their conveyance a matter of little COMPARATIVE difficulty; had they all survived, he must surely have had a carriage built for them on purpose!

I am happy I had not closed this packet, as it gives me an opportunity of recording a scene that has just now passed, while my heart still glows with the emotions it has excited.

The youth, whom I had the good fortune to protect, from the ruthless fangs of the press-gang, presented himself before me, at an early hour this morning. —"You will think me a sad ungrateful "fellow, Sir," said he, "that I should "not have appeared to thank you, for "the very great service you rendered "me; but, the moment I obtained the "Captain's leave, I made the best of my "way out of this place; as I did not think "I should be in safety, till I reached "home. I set off on foot, and had got "rather more than ten miles on my

" journey laſt night, when I was over-
" taken by a fellow midſhipman, who in-
" formed me of the loſs you had ſuſ-
" tained from the ſharks of the cuſtom
" houſe; I have got here, a bit of your
" India ſort of ſtuff, to take home to my
" mother; but I know ſhe would wear
" nothing I brought her with any ſatiſ-
" faction, if ſhe thought ſo meanly of
" me, as that I could baſely forget a debt
" of gratitude." So ſaying, he pulled from his boſom a very handſome ſhawl, purchaſed no doubt, with the ſcanty earnings of his initiating voyage. " Here, " Sir," ſaid he preſenting it to me in a careleſs manner, as if in order to depreciate its value; " it is nothing to be ſure " in compariſon of the fine things you " have loſt; but, as it is *real Indian*, it may " be more acceptable to your Engliſh " friends, than ſomething much better " bought at home." There was ſomething ſo open and ingenuous, in the countenance of the youth, while he ſpoke theſe words, which he did in the moſt impreſſive manner, that he altogether overpowered my feelings. Protecting power! I exclaimed, thou, whoſe mighty breath, can kindle in the human ſoul, the ſhame of virtue; oh! grant, that the ſon of Zaarmilla, may be capable of inſpiring in the breaſt of a ſtranger, ſuch

ſenſations as the noble action of this youth cauſes now to glow in mine! But think not, excellent young man (continued I) that I can deprive thy mother of the gift of ſuch a ſon. No, long may ſhe wear this, and proudly may ſhe exhibit it to her friends and neighbours as the ſweet pledge of filial affection; more honourable than the gifts of princes! more precious than the jewels of Golconda! I was interrupted by the Dewan, who had hitherto been a ſilent ſpectator of all that had paſſed. Shaking the youth heartily by the hand, "You "are a noble fellow," ſaid he, "and I "muſt know more of you; but you "may make yourſelf perfectly eaſy about "this gentleman's loſſes, as I believe, "I have taken ſuch ſteps, as will effect "their reſtitution; but I muſt let you "know where to find me, and aſſure "you, that wherever I am, there you "ſhall have a friend." So ſaying, he gave him his addreſs, enjoining him to call upon him as ſoon as he could find an opportunity. While he yet ſpoke, two men arrived, with the whole of the goods which had been ſeiſed by the pirates. The Dewan, deſired each of us to pick out our own; but would give us no ſatisfaction as to the manner in which he had effected their releaſe.

I am told, the carriage waits for me, and muſt therefore conclude this long protracted journal.

May the Almighty Preſerver, whoſe omnipotent arm hath ſafely guided me acroſs the world of waters, to this remote corner of the habitable globe; He, whoſe eſſence pervades all ſpace! ſhed the dews of his mercy, on the dwelling of my friend! may his choiceſt bleſſings reſt on the child of my affections! the bloſſom of my heart! and may the ſweet buds of hope, peace, and contentment, continue to expand in the virtuous boſom of my gentle Zamarcanda! What can I ſay more?

LETTER XIII.

AT length Maandaara, behold me in the metropolis of England, the celebrated city of London. My heart bounds within me at the idea of the new ſcenes I am about to behold. The pulſe of expectation beats in every vein.—I was all impatience, to deliver my letters of introduction; but, unluckily, we arrived at the very ſeaſon of a ſolemn feſtival, which is very properly celebrated by the Chriſ-

tians, in commemoration of an event which opened to their view the glorious hopes of rising from the bed of death, to the regions of eternal glory!—You may well imagine that a festival originating in such a source, is celebrated throughout the Christian world with appropriate solemnity. With them, the forms and ceremonies of their religion, remain not merely as a testimony of their superior piety which produced them. These institutions have not become a reproach to the degeneracy of succeeding ages! They have not, with them, become a solemn mockery! a satire upon a trifling, and frivolous generation! No; at the time of these holydays, most of the families of distinction retire into the country, that they may there enjoy the heart-purifying benefit of solemn meditation, uninterrupted by the business, or pleasures of the world. Ah! how edifying their devotion!—How exemplary their conduct!—How happy for the community must it be, if the lower orders are induced to tread in their foot-steps! The few people of rank who remain in town, are equally sedulous in preparing their minds for this devout solemnity.—They frequent no places that are not private:—private theatricals, private concerts private pharo-banks, I have already

heard of; and I make no doubt, there are numerous other places of private reſort, equally honourable to religion, and favourable to virtue!

By the kind care of my friend Delomond, I am provided with a very convenient lodging, in the ſtreet which leads to the King's palace. This palace is, in truth, but a mean building, very unlike the Durbar of an Eaſtern Monarch.

I have ſpent the greater part of the week, in taking a ſurvey of the town, and examining its temples, and other public buildings.—The extent of this metropolis, though it ſhrinks into inſignificance, when compared with the Imperial reſidence of our ancient Rajahs, the celebrated birth place of Rama*, or the Ganga-waſhed walls of Canouge †; is yet ſufficiently great, to ſtrike with aſtoniſhment the inſignificant mortal, who has beheld only the modern cities

* Oude, ſaid in the Mahhabaret, to have been the firſt regular imperial city of Hindooſtan, and extended, if we may believe the Bramins, over a line of ten Yogans, or about forty miles; and the preſent city of Lucknow, was only a lodge for one of its gates.

† Canouge, a celebrated ancient city of Hindooſtan, on the banks of the Ganges; whoſe walls are ſaid in the Mahhabaret, to have been one hundred miles in circumference.

of Hindooſtan. The foot-paths which are raiſed at the ſides of every ſtreet, are filled with a buſy throng, where it is curious to behold women, as well as men, apparently intent upon buſineſs, entering into the ſhops, and making purchaſes, with the undaunted mien of maſculine aſſurance. Far from walking along the ſtreets with that timid air of ſhrinking modeſty, which diſtinguiſhes the females of our race *, when they venture into the walks of men, their fearleſs eye undaunted meets the glances of every beholder; and happy is it for the men of the country, that it doth ſo; for if modeſty was ſuper-added to their other charms it would be impoſſible to guard the heart from their faſcinating influence.

Having heard that the firſt day of the week, Audeetye-war†, was appointed for attending the worſhip of the Deity in public; I expreſſed to Delomond, my wiſh of being preſent at the ſolemnity. He declined accompanying me; but

* See the elegant engravings, illuſtrative of Mr. Hodges's remarks on this ſubject, in his Travels in India.

† It is very remarkable, that the days of the week are named in the Shanſcrit language, from the ſame planets to which they were aſſigned by the Greeks and Romans.

ſent to a Lady of his acquaintance, to beg ſhe would accommodate me with a ſeat in her pew.—Theſe pews, are little incloſures, into which the greateſt part of the temple is ſub-divided. We walked up to that which belonged to this Bibby, preceded by one of her ſervants, who opened the door of the pew, and followed by another in the ſame livery, who carried the books of prayer; with which having preſented us, he retired. I have already obſerved to you, how ſcrupulouſly the Engliſh Chriſtians adhere to thoſe precepts of their Maſter, which ſeem to diſcountenance the outward appearance of a religious ſentiment; and ſo rigorouſly do they abſtain from the diſplay of theſe delightful emotions, that they who will thankfully acknowledge the moſt trifling obligation conferred upon them by the meaneſt of their fellow-creatures, would bluſh to be ſuſpected of gratitude to the beneficent Governor of the Univerſe! Inſtead of behaving in this temple, as if they had aſſembled together to ſend up their united tribute of praiſe, thankſgiving, and humble ſupplication, to the Moſt High, ſo ſucceſsfully did they affect the concealment of their devotional ſentiments, that no one could have ſuſpected they had met together for any other purpoſe, but that of ſtaring at each

other's dreſs! I muſt, however, make an exception in regard to a ſmall number of people, very plainly habited, who ſtood during the ſervice, in a part of the church called the aiſle, theſe appeared *not* to have arrived at ſuch a ſtate of perfection. *They* could not affect *indifference*, as they joined in the petition for averting the puniſhment of ſins; nor conceal the intereſt they had in the glad tidings of eternal happineſs. They liſtened with peculiar complacency to the accounts of him, who "came to preach the goſpel "to the poor," and the hopes of his favour ſeemed to irradiate with joy the boſom of reſignation. A female of advanced life, in whom all theſe emotions were diſcernable, particularly arreſted my attention. The paleneſs of her countenance, ſpoke her want of health, and the lines which ſorrow had traced in it, accorded with the ſable weeds of widowhood, which ſhe wore. She appeared ready to faint from the fatigue of long ſtanding, and made a modeſt application to a perſon, who ſeemed to act as porter of the pews, for admittance into one of them. To my aſtoniſhment, ſhe met with a refuſal; nor did any one of the gorgeouſly apparelled Chriſtians who ſat in them, appear to be any way concerned for her ſituation; indeed, they all ſeem-

ed to regard thoſe who worſhipped God from the aiſle, as if they had been beings of an inferior race. I was, however, well convinced, that Chriſtianity admits of no ſuch diſtinctions; and ſuppoſing the Chriſtian Lady who ſat by me, though her eyes were roving to all parts of the temple, was, in reality, too much engaged in her devotions, to obſerve what paſſed, I took the liberty of acting for her, and opening the door of the pew, invited the poor ſick ſtranger to a ſeat. At that moment, the prieſt was preferring a petition, in favour of all "fatherleſs children, and widows, and *all who are "deſolate and oppreſſed;*" to which the great Lady had juſt uttered the reſponſe of, "We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord!"—when obſerving the poor woman by her ſide, her face inſtantly flaſhed a deep crimſon; rage and indignation darted from her eyes, and, telling the fainting ſtranger, that "ſhe was very "impudent, for daring to intrude herſelf "into her preſence," ſhe turned her out into the aiſle. I was weak enough, to be ſhocked at the behaviour of this well-dreſſed votary of Chriſtianity. Ah! thought I, can it be, that this woman ſhould be ſo conſcious of her ſuperiority, in every thing which conſtitutes diſtinction in the eye of the Omnipotent, as to

conſider *herſelf* worthy of *ſitting in his preſence*, while ſhe ſpurns from her own, the humble child of poverty, and affliction?

I have juſt returned from my firſt viſit to Doctor Severan, the gentleman to whoſe attentions Grey has moſt particularly recommended me; nor could he, according to the opinion of Delomond, have done me a more eſſential ſervice. My accompliſhed friend, who was, it ſeems, the companion of his youthful ſtudies, tells me, that at the univerſity, it appeared evident that he was born to be the ornament of Science. Whilſt other young men were purſuing the gaudy phantom of pleaſure, his time was occupied in inveſtigating the Laws of Nature, in tearing the choiceſt ſecrets from her reluctant boſom, or, in tracing her foot-ſteps through the various phænomena of the material world.—Nor, continued Delomond, as we drove to this gentleman's houſe, is he leſs eſtimable as a man, than reſpectable as a philoſopher. But, indeed, the connection between philoſophy and virtue, is "ſo natural, that it is only their ſeparation that can excite ſurpriſe; for is not the very baſis of ſcience, a ſincere and diſintereſted love of truth? An enlarged view of things cannot fail to deſtroy the effects of prejudice: and

while it awakens in the mind, the moſt ſublime ideas of the great original cauſe; it promotes, moſt neceſſarily, a deteſtation of every thing that is mean or baſe."

We juſt then ſtopped at the door of his friend, and were ushered into an apartment ſurrounded with ſhelves of books, arranged in no very good order; every table, and almoſt every ſeat, was occupied by numerous odd ſhaped veſſels, ſome of glaſs, and others of metal, but for what uſe I could not poſſibly comprehend. The philoſopher himſelf, at length appeared. A tall thin man, of about forty years of age, his dreſs put on in a manner particularly careleſs; but his countenance, ſo mild, and ſerious! it was the very perſonification of benignity. He appeared rejoiced at ſeeing Delomond, who, if poſſible, was exalted in my eſteem, by ſeeing the degree of eſtimation in which he was held by the philoſopher. Myſelf he received in the moſt gracious manner; and, by his kindneſs to me, he gave the moſt convincing proof of his regard for my friend Grey, of whom, indeed, he ſpoke very handſomely. He informed me, that Lady Grey, widow to the brother of our friend, was then at her country reſidence, but that her brother, Sir Caprice Ardent, for whom I had likewiſe a letter of intro-

duction, was in London; and added, that he ſhould do himſelf the pleaſure of accompanying me to the houſe of this gentleman, the day after to-morrow; and hoped that I would come *to eat my breakfaſt with him, before we went.* You will ſmile at the invitation: and, no doubt, be ſurpriſed to find this philoſopher, whom one would expect to ſoar above the practices and notions of the vulgar, taking ſuch a method of ſhewing his hoſpitality; but it is a difficult thing to get the better of early prejudice; nor does the generality of mankind in any country, enquire into the propriety of cuſtoms, to which they have been rendered familiar by uſe. Though to us it appears highly abſurd, as well as groſsly indelicate, to ſee people looking in each others' faces while they chew their food, and calling it ſociable to ſwallow their morſel at the ſame moment; it is poſſible, that theſe Europeans may think our ſolitary manner of eating equally ridiculous; and if they abſtain from cenſuring it, is it not a proof of their being more enlightened? Often have I obſerved to you, and often do I ſee reaſon to repeat the obſervation, *that it is they only who have conquered the force of prejudice in themſelves, that can make any allowance for the effects of it in others.*

Coffee-houſes, ſimilar to that deſcribed in one of my letters from Calcutta, are to be met with in every quarter of this city. Thoſe I have here ſeen, are ſchools of politics, reſorted to by all who take an intereſt in public affairs;—a true and authentic ſtatement of which is daily printed on large ſheets of paper, and copies are, I am told, ſent to every part of the iſland. In the Coffee-houſes, theſe are handed about from politician to politician, and furniſh matter for the general diſcourſe. For my part, though poſſeſſed of a ſufficient ſhare of curioſity, I did not care to be too forward in ſeeking to pry into the ſtate affairs of the country; but having accompanied Delomond, yeſterday, into a neighbouring coffee-houſe, and hearing a gentleman who ſat near me, declare, that the paper he was then perufing, was indubitably publiſhed under the immediate direction of the Britiſh miniſter, I could not reſtrain my impatience, to examine its contents—and the moment he laid it down, I eagerly flew to its peruſal.

It is impoſſible to deſcribe to you, the admiration with which the reading of this paper inſpired me, for the talents and virtues of this ſapient noble, who preſides in the ſupreme councils of this

happy nation. So extenſive! ſo multifarious! ſo minute were the ſubjects of his concerns, that one contemplates with aſtoniſhment, the mind that is capable of graſping ſuch an infinity of objects. In one paragraph, he reports to the nation, the account of a victory which their armies had obtained. *or nearly obtained* over the forces of their Chriſtian enemies; tells the number of the ſlain—of thoſe who are ſtill ſuffering the agonies of pain, far from the ſoothing balm of affection! far from the healing conſolations of friendſhip!—To the families of ſuch as are in a ſituation to afford the expenſive inſignia of ſorrow, the names of their fallen friends are announced; but, to the poor, who can only afford to wear mourning in their hearts, there is no neceſſity of giving ſuch a particular account of their friends; it is ſufficient for them to know, that few, very few of them can ever again behold their native homes! In the next paragraph, this puiſſant ſtateſman informs the world of the ſafe arrival in town of Sir Dapper Dawdle, in his phaeton and four; which, and many ſimilar pieces of intelligence, are, no doubt, given with the beneficent intention of informing the poor and wretched, where they may find their benefactors; thoſe, who by their liberal and repeated

acts of charity, have obtained *the bleſſing of them, who are ready to periſh.* Nor is the nouriſhment of the mind neglected by this wiſe miniſter; the public are informed, in this newſpaper, where ſuch books are to be had, as are doubtleſs, beſt calculated for their inſtruction. I have already told you, that the females of this place go themſelves into the ſhops, in order to purchaſe what they want: and, methinks, it is highly praiſe-worthy of this good ſuperintendant of the kingdom, to point out to the fair creatures, where they may lay out their money to the moſt advantage. They are in one part, ſtrongly aſſured of the ſuperior excellence of the goods at the Pigeons; in another, they are conjured to buy their ſtockings at the Fleece; their ſhoes, their gloves, nay the very powder, with which they diſfigure their beautiful hair, are all objects of this good nobleman's tender anxiety; indeed, the proper decoration of their perſons, ſeems to employ no inconſiderable portion of his attention; there is no deformity of the body, no diſorder of the ſkin, againſt which they are not here provided with a remedy. Nor doth *royal* dignity itſelf, diſdain to extend its cares to beautifying and adorning the female ſubjects of theſe realms. You will, perhaps, ſmile, to hear of the *royal*

firman's being attached to the ladies' garters? But there is not a brush for their nails, nor a soap for their hands, nor a powder for their teeth, nor wash for their pretty faces, that is not as highly honoured. Alas! how much are these females indebted to a prince, who evinces such unequalled solicitude for the preservation of their beauty!

Nor doth the parental care of royalty for the welfare of the people stop here; their health is an object of peculiar concern; innumerable are the lists of medicines, of approved efficacy, which are here recommended to the public; I reckoned above sixty, that had received the *royal* sanction, sealed by the *royal* arms, and mentioned by *royal* authority; when we reflect, how many nauseous draughts, the *royal* counsellors must needs have tasted; how many bitter pills, they, doubtless, must have swallowed, before they could advise his Majesty on a subject so important; we can scarcely refrain from pitying the situation of those, whose high stations impose upon them the performance of such disagreeable duties!!—I could furnish you with further proofs of the tender care of this government, for the health and happiness of its subjects, but am obliged to leave off, on account of my visit to Sir Caprice Ardent.

I forget whether I informed you, that a neceſſary part of my eſtabliſhment, is a carriage. A model of which, I have this morning purchaſed for you, at what is called a toy-ſhop, that you may form ſome idea of the manner in which the great are drawn about the ſtreets of this city. Numbers however, even of an exalted rank, occaſionally walk: nor is it thought any degradation, to make uſe of their own legs. I this morning met the heir apparent of the throne, walking on foot, in the very ſtreet in which I live; far from appearing in my eyes as ſhorn of his dignity, by thus condeſcending to mingle with his people, it ſhed upon it, in my opinion, a beam of additional luſtre. Ah! what a tranſcendant degree of excellence muſt we ſuppoſe theſe highly favoured Princes to poſſeſs, who, together with the dignified ſentiments of their exalted rank, enjoy the advantages of that inſtruction, which is only to be obtained by commerce with the world! The mirror of truth is ſet before them, and, ſurely, they will never turn from it to view themſelves through the diſtorting medium of venal flattery, and deceitful adulation!!—But, to return from this digreſſion; I took up Dr. Severan, according to appointment, and proceeded with him to the houſe of the Baronet, which is

ſituated at the upper end of a ſhort ſtreet, none of the buildings of which are yet compleated; they ſeem as if they were intended for houſes of very different ſizes and ſhapes, and at preſent have a very ſtrange appearance; but, it is impoſſible to form any idea of what they may be, when finiſhed. The entrance to the houſe of Sir Caprice, was ſomewhat obſtructed by heaps of rubbiſh, occaſioned, as we ſoon learned, by the deſtruction of a row of pillars, of Grecian architecture, with which the hall had been originally graced. Thoſe proud ornaments, which during the ſhort period of their exaltation, had heard the lofty roof which they ſuſtained, re-echo the voices of their flatterers, were on a ſudden, diſgraced, diſmiſſed, and hurled headlong to the ground! Their fall was like that of the favourites of Princes, which ſhakes the throne they once appeared deſtined to ſupport. A long train of dependants were involved in the mighty ruin, and it was not without ſome degree of danger, that, following the ſervant, we ſcrambled through this ſcene of deſolation, to the apartment of Sir Caprice, whom we found ſeated at a large table, on which an innumerable quantity of plans, maps, models of buildings, and other various ornaments, were heap-

ed. After reading the letter I had brought him, congratulating me on my arrival in England, and enquiring after the health of Mr. Grey, he turned to Doctor Severan, and expreſſed, in ſtrong terms, the particular pleaſure he at that moment felt in ſeeing him.—" I know you are a man of taſte," cried he, " and ſhall be wonderfully happy to have your advice on the plan of a new building, which I intend ſhall be ſomething very extraordinary. Here it is," continued he, holding up a ſmall model; " here, you ſee, I have contrived to unite all the orders of architecture in regular gradation; here, you will pleaſe to obſerve, that the baſis is truly Gothic; above that, obſerve the Tuſcan; above that, the Compoſite, the Corinthian, the Doric, the Ionic—all placed as they never were placed before! Still, however, the top is unfiniſhed; for that I have had many plans; but, that which pleaſes me beſt, is, the idea of crowning the whole with a Chineſe temple; is it not a good thought, eh? Perhaps this gentleman, could furniſh me with a hint. Pray Sir," turning to me, " has the Emperor of China, done any thing new in this way, of late?" The philoſopher, perceiving my confuſion, reminded this noble builder, that I was from Bengal, and had never

been in China in my life. " From Bengal ? Ay, ay, I had forgot; a Hindoo is he ? well, well, perhaps, then, he could give me a plan of a Moſque, a Minaret, or ſome ſuch thing, it would oblige me extremely, as it would be ſomething quite new, and uncommon." Perceiving that he waited my anſwer, I told him, that I certainly have had many opportunities of ſeeing Moſques, ſome of the moſt ſtately of which, were built from the ruins of our ancient temples, particularly that at Benares, the Minarets of which were eſteemed eminently beautiful; but, that as I had never been in one, I was altogether unqualified to give an accurate deſcription of them. " Did not trouble church much, I ſuppoſe, Sir ?" rejoined he, with an arch ſmile. " Good heaven !" cried Severan, " do you not know, that a Moſque is a Mahommedan place of worſhip, and have I not already told you, that this gentleman is a Hindoo ?"—" Ay, ay, I had forgot, he is a *heathen*. So much the better; I ſhall love him, if he hates all prieſts, and prieſt-ridden fools ; I never knew any good come of either." So ſaying, he offered me his hand, and ſhook mine, in a moſt cordial manner. He then renewed his ſolicitations for the opinion of Severan, in regard to the manner in which he ſhould finiſh his

projected building* (a building for which he had not yet fixed upon a ſituation); the philoſopher eluded any further diſſertations on the ſubject, with great dexterity, and finally prevailed upon him to introduce us to the apartment of his Lady.

We found Lady Ardent, and her eldeſt daughter, in the apartment called the drawing room. They were prepared to go out, and had their carriage waiting for them at the door; but, on our entrance, politely reſumed their ſeats. The countenance of neither of theſe ladies, exhibited one ſingle line, that could lead to the developement of their characters; all was placid uniformity, and *unſpeaking* regularity of feature. Surely, ſaid I to myſelf, theſe women muſt have arrived at the very zenith of perfection! How effectually muſt every paſſion have been ſubdued under the glorious empire of reaſon, before they could have attained ſuch inexpreſſive indifference? It is true, that in their eyes, the ſparkling chub-

* Explanations of the terms of Architecture. &c. though very neceſſary to the friends of the Rajah, it was thought, would be rather tireſome to the Engliſh reader; they are therefore omitted by the Tranſlator, who has frequently been obliged to take liberties of the ſame nature.

dar * of intellect, doth not proclaim his maſter's preſence—but the apathy which ſits upon their foreheads, ſpeaks in plain language, their contempt of the world and its vanities. With them, as with the beloved of Kriſhna, pain and pleaſure are as one! The modeſty of female baſhfulneſs, ſealed the lips of the young lady, but her mother enquired after my friend Grey, if not with affection, at leaſt with much politeneſs. She treated me (as I was told by Doctor Severan) with an uncommon degree of attention. She gave me a ſlip of ſtiff paper, on which was marked the tenth day of the next month, which, I was informed by my friend, was an invitation to a rout; that is to ſay, an entertainment, where a vaſt number of rational, wiſe, and well-informed votaries of immortality, meet together, not to converſe, but to look at each other, and to turn over the bits of painted paper, called cards! After receiving this mark of her Ladyſhip's attention, we took our leave, and retired.

I was curious to know ſome further particulars of a family, whoſe manners appeared to me ſo peculiar; and Doctor, Severan, whom I have the happineſs of

* The ſervant whoſe buſineſs it is to proclaim the titles of any great perſonage.

ſeeing every day, has had the goodneſs amply to gratify my curioſity. He began with obſerving, that " to thoſe who take pleaſure in inveſtigating the phænomena that fall under their obſervation, either mental or material, it is not ſufficient to ſay that things are ſo, they muſt develope the cauſes in which they have originated. As there are few ſubſtances found in a natural ſtate, whoſe conſtituent parts cannot be ſeparated from each other, by the methods uſed in chemiſtry, ſo there are few predominant diſpoſitions of the mind, which may not be annalized, and traced through their origin and progreſs by any one who will give himſelf the trouble to purſue the neceſſary proceſs.

" This inveſtigation, if accurately followed," continued my friend, " will invariably lead us to the *early education* of the object of it. In *it* we will commonly find an explanation of the manner in which the peculiar combination of ideas that ultimately forms character, has been produced; to it, therefore, we muſt always recur in our annalization of the propenſities and conduct of any individual.

" The father of Sir Caprice, was three times married.—His firſt wife, who was the heireſs of a wealthy family, died ſoon after the birth of a daughter; in

whom, the fortunes of her family are at preſent centered.—His ſecond wife, the mother of Sir Caprice, brought him no other dower beſides beauty, and good temper. Her premature death, overwhelmed him in affliction; but, happily, juſt as he was erecting a monument to her memory, in the inſcription of which, he gave notice to the world, that his affections were for ever buried in her tomb, a conſoling angel appeared to comfort him, in the ſhape of Lady Caroline Beaumont.

" This Lady, who brought him only one daughter, proved an excellent wife, and would have been one of the beſt of mothers to his children, but for a certain timidity of temper which reſtrained her from exerting authority over the children of another. From her, therefore, they met with unlimited indulgence, that moſt powerful inflamer of the paſſions, in whoſe high temperature, fortitude is loſt, and ſelfiſhneſs, arrogance, and pride, are inſeparably united.

" Their father having a diſlike to public ſchools, and reſolving that his daughter ſhould ſhare the advantages of a claſſical education with his ſon, provided them with a tutor at home—the reverend Mr. Ergo. Well do I remember him. He afterwards got the living

of our pariſh, and uſed to ſtuff his ſermons with Greek and Hebrew, in ſuch a manner as to make the poor people ſtare at the depth of his knowledge. In truth he was a moſt profound linguiſt; a complete walking vocabulary;—but of every virtue that dilates the heart, of every ſcience that expands the ſoul, while it enlarges the underſtanding, he was completely ignorant. The higheſt idea he could form of the efforts of human intellect, was confined to an accurate knowledge of nouns, verbs, caſes, and tenſes; and, to commit theſe to the memory of his pupils, was the chief object of his ſolicitude. Unqualified to fix the generous principle in the ductile boſom, he attended not to the developement of mind, but on the contrary, extoled as marks of genius, the early whims and caprices of his pupil, which were, in reality, the ebullitions of an unregulated imagination.

" It is, perhaps, to this want of judgment in the tutor, that the extraordinary degree of ardour and unſteadineſs, which has diſtinguiſhed the Baronet, may, in ſome degree, be attributed. A recital of the various and oppoſite purſuits, in which he has been at different times engaged, will be the beſt illuſtration I can give you of his character, which is ſuch

an one, as I ſuppoſe, your Eaſtern world has never produced. He is, however, by no means, an unique in this part of the world; where the liberty of committing every folly that ſuggeſts itſelf to the fancy, is conſidered as the moſt glorious privilege.

"The ardour of Sir Caprice's mind," continued my friend, "was, for the firſt two year's after his father's death, expended upon running horſes; at length, finding himſelf *taken in* by his compeers of the turf, cheated by his grooms, and moſt frequently diſtanced at the poſt, he ſold his racers, and foreſwore Newmarket for ever."

Here I was obliged to beg an explanation from the philoſopher, and found, that it is cuſtomary for the great men in this kingdom, in their exertion of the privilege hinted at above, to expend immenſe ſums of money on a very beautiful, though uſeleſs, ſpecies of horſes. Theſe animals are, however doomed to experience the effects of the capricious humours of their maſters. At one time, they are conſidered as the deareſt friends, and moſt loved companions of their lords, who are never ſo happy, as when in the apartments of their four-legged favourites. While this fit of fondneſs laſts, they are attended by numerous ſervants,

who, taking conſequence from the dignity of their employment, are at once the moſt inſolent, and moſt rapacious of the domeſtic tribe. Some of theſe are employed in rubbing the ſkins of the horſes into a beautiful poliſh, while others ſerve them with the choiceſt food. Nay, ſo far does their care extend, that, as if the clothing of nature were not ſufficient, they provide them with woollen garments which completely cover their whole bodies. Will not Maandaara think that the truth hath forſaken his friend, when I ſay, that the tormenting of theſe unfortunate favourites, forms one of the chief amuſements of the Engliſh nobility? But, ſo it is;—at certain appointed periods, they are brought out in the midſt of a concourſe of ſpectators, ſtripped of their fine clothing, and forced to gallop round a certain piece of ground full ſpeed, while for the amuſement of their cruel maſters they are whipped, and even goaded by ſharp inſtruments of ſteel, until the blood flows in ſtreams, from their lacerated bodies, and this is called ſport!—But, to return to Sir Caprice Ardent. If I rightly remember, the next purſuit upon which, according to Doctor Severan's account, he employed the vigour of his mind, was Hunting. Here are no Jungles in

which to purſue the ferocious tyrants of the foreſt. Here, courage is not called forth in the attack of the wild Elephant, or the roaring Lion. Nor is activity and watchfulneſs neceſſary, to guard againſt the ſudden ſpring of the carnage-loving Tyger. The purſuit of a ſmall animal called a Fox, employs the vigour of the Engliſh hunters. The miſchief, which the philoſopher informed me, was done by Sir Caprice, and his friends, in purſuit of this little animal, I confeſs, appeared to me altogether unaccountable. He mentioned their having ſpoiled fifteen farms, by breaking down the fences, and that a young wood, of great extent, which had been planted by his father, was by the advice of one of the companions of Sir Caprice, in order to give free ſcope to the magnanimous purſuers of the red fugitive, burned to the ground. Another conſequence of this diverſion, was, to me, equally incomprehenſible. Notwithſtanding the coldneſs of the climate, it ſeems to be productive of the moſt aſtoniſhing degree of thirſt. The ſum of money, which according to the calculation of Doctor Severan, was expended by Sir Caprice, on the wine gulped down by his companions of the chace, would, if it had been employed in im-

proving the uncultivated parts of his eſtate, have been ſufficient to have made the barren wilderneſs, a garden of delights.

" Next to hunting," ſaid Doctor Severan, " ſucceeded the love of equipage, and fine clothes. It was now the ambition of the Baronet's heart, to attract the attention of the Ladies. His ambition was, perhaps, in no other purſuit of his life, ſo fully gratified. Wherever he appeared, his exquiſite taſte was the object of unbounded admiration.

" To have a wife, whoſe beauty would juſtify the opinion entertained of his taſte, and who would likewiſe give him a new opportunity of diſplaying it, in the choice of female ornaments, now engroſſed his cares. Such a one, he ſoon met with. You have ſeen his Lady. She is what is commonly called, *one of the beſt of women.* To an evenneſs of temper, flowing from inſenſibility, ſhe adds a ſtrict obſervance of all the rules of politeneſs and good breeding, taught by that ſort of education given at modern boarding-ſchools; which being directed to uneſſential forms, and uſeleſs accompliſhments, renders the character cold and artificial. Though incapable of generous friendſhip, or heart warming affection, ſhe is never deficient in the

external ceremonials of reſpect; and though ſhe never did a kind or good-natured thing in her life, the low temperature of her paſſions, aſſiſts her in preſerving that reſemblance of placidity, often very improperly, called *ſweetneſs*, which at all times appears in her countenance.

" With a better underſtanding, ſhe might, perhaps, have directed the effervescence of her huſband's diſpoſition to ſome uſeful purpoſe, and reſtrained it within the limits of common ſenſe. As it is, ſhe contents herſelf, if, by the aſſiſtance of a *little* cunning, in which women of this claſs of intellect are never deficient, ſhe can work out any *little* end, to which her *little* ſelfiſh mind inclines her.

" It would be too tedious," continued Severan, " to follow the Baronet through all the various whims and fancies, in which his reſtleſs ſpirits have diſcharged themſelves.

" The only period in which I ever knew reading to occupy much of his time, was, ſoon after his marriage, when he took to ſtudying books of education; and had actually from theſe compoſed a Treatiſe, for the inſtruction of his expected heir; which however, was forgot before the child had learned to ſpeak, for then he had turned *improver*.

" It was then, that the fine grove of oaks and cheſnuts, the maſſy richneſs of whoſe foliage, ſerved equally to ſhelter and adorn his ſtately manſion, was levelled to the ground: and every ſpot within ſight of the windows, metamorphoſed into a 'dry ſmooth-ſhaven green,' awkwardly ſprinkled with knarled ſapplings, and ill-formed clumps of ſhrubbery. How far this ſpirit of improvement might have led him, it is impoſſible to conjecture, for it was ſtill at its height, when a piece of ſilver ore, found by one of the workmen, in digging a canal, intended to meander through the grounds, gave a new object to his ever ardent mind.

" For three ſleepleſs nights, his fancy revelled in all the riches of Peru. Miners were brought from various parts of the kingdom, and the greateſt encouragement offered to thoſe who ſhould be ſucceſsful in diſcovering the vein, of the exiſtence of which he could not entertain a doubt. Huge excavations were made in various directions, all begun in hope, and ending in diſappointment; the miners, ſtrictly followed the uſual example of our Britiſh miniſters of ſtate; who, when they have plunged the nation into an unneceſſary and unſucceſsful war, take care, when the account of defeat comes

from one quarter, to amuſe the attention of the public, with the proſpect of better ſucceſs in another; and Sir Caprice, like the honeſt Britiſh people was too willing to be deceived, to ſuffer himſelf to diſcover the trick. At length, finding his miners grow rich, in proportion as he grew poor, his patience became entirely exhauſted; and with many execrations on their knavery, and his own folly, he ſuddenly diſmiſſed them all, and ſet himſelf diligently to repair the devaſtations they had committed on the face of his eſtate. It was this circumſtance, which, perhaps, turned his thoughts to agriculture, which, as he contrived to manage it, was as unproductive a folly, as any in which he has ever yet engaged. With ſuch avidity, however, did he enter into it, that I well remember him walking about the fields, with a ſilver ſpoon in his hand, to taſte the different compoſts, into the ſpecific qualities of which, he thought it neceſſary to examine; and, ignorant of chemical proceſs, he truſted to his palate, for a diſcovery of the acids or alkalis they contained. It would ſeem, that, in this particular, it had proved a deceitful guide;—for, notwithſtanding his delicacy of taſte, and although he had laid out his fields in the beſt method, that the beſt theoretical writers had pointed out, he

had the worſt crops that were known in the country; he was, at length, contented to replace the old tenants in their farms; and finding his eſtate conſiderably incumbered, by his various ſchemes of fortune-making (avarice having now become the paſſion which chiefly predominated in his heart) he reſolved for a few years, to try the economical plan of travelling. He accordingly ſet out for the continent, with his Lady, leaving his eldeſt daughter at the moſt faſhionable boarding-ſchool in London; his ſecond, who had been adopted from the hour of her birth by his ſiſter, Miſs Ardent, remained with her; and the youngeſt, had the happineſs of being received under the roof of her excellent Aunt, Lady Grey.

" Sir Caprice Ardent and his Lady remained abroad for ſix years, in the courſe of which period, his Lady brought him three ſons; only one of whom ſurvives; a poor puny boy, ſo completely ſpoiled by indulgence, that there is no bearing his petulance and prate. During the reſidence of our Baronet in Italy, he gave ſufficient proofs to his friends, that the change of atmoſphere, had no effect on the temperament of his mind. Antiques, Muſic, Pictures, Statues, Intaglios, and even Butterflies, were, in their turns, the excluſive objects of his atten-

tion. The death of a relation, who bequeathed him a large legacy, brought him at length back to his country, juſt as the rage for building had begun to occupy his mind. With its effects, you are ſufficiently acquainted; and you will, probably before the concluſion of the ſummer, ſee it give place to ſome other abſurdity, which will be entered on with equal ſkill, and ultimately abandoned with equal facility."

Alas! cried I, I find, that folly is a plant which flouriſhes in every climate; it only differs in the colouring. But if it is not intruding too far upon your time and patience, I ſhould be glad to know, what hue it aſſumed in the Young Lady who was educated by the ſame tutor.

My friend willingly gratified my curioſity, and thus proceeded:

"To the eldeſt ſiſter of Sir Caprice, who inherited from nature a ſtronger intellect, and quicker perception than her brother, the tuition of Doctor Ergo was attended with more beneficial conſequences. The ancient authors, whoſe works were by him put into her hands, merely as exerciſes in the dead languages, attracted her attention. She acquired a taſte for their beauties, and ſoon be-

came ſo addicted to reading, as at an early period of life, rendered her miſtreſs of an extenſive degree of information, But, alas! it is not merely a knowledge of the facts contained in hiſtory, nor a reliſh for the beauties of poetic imagery, nor a ſuperficial acquaintance with any branch of ſcience, that can effectually expand the powers of the human mind. For that great end, the judgment muſt be qualified to apply them to uſeful purpoſes, It was this deficiency, which led Miſs Ardent, to value her accidental attainments at ſo high a rate, as to make her deſpiſe not only the weakneſſes, but even the domeſtic virtues of her own ſex. Their occupations and amuſements, ſhe treated with the utmoſt contempt; and thought that in this contempt, ſhe gave the ſureſt proof of the ſuperiority of her own *maſculine underſtanding*.

From her mind, though the particles of vanity were not expelled, they aſſumed a new form—inſtead of the attention to external beauty, feminine graces, and elegant manners, the vanity of Miſs Ardent appeared in an affectation of originality of ſentiment and intrepid ſingularity of conduct. In ſupport of this character, ſhe altogether loſes ſight of her own, which is naturally gentle and benevolent; and enforces her opinion in ſo dictatorial a man-

ner, as renders her equally the object of dread and diſlike to the generoſity of her acquaintance. And, indeed, it muſt be acknowledged, that this accompliſhed woman, in her eagerneſs to diſplay the ſtrength of her mind, too often lays aſide that outer robe of delicacy, which is not only the ornament, but the armour of female virtue; and that ſhe never attempts to ſhine, without exciting the alternate emotions of admiration and diſguſt." Good heavens, exclaimed I, and is *this* the conſequence of female learning? is the mind of women *really* formed of ſuch weak materials, that as ſoon as it emerges from ignorance, it muſt neceſſarily become intoxicated with the fumes of vanity and conceit? "And did your highneſs never ſee a *male* pedant?" replied the philoſopher. "Did you never behold a man deſtitute of early education, and confined to the ſociety of ignorant and illiterate people, who had by ſome chance, acquired a knowledge of books; and did he not appear as proud of his ſuperior information, as ridiculouſly vain, as arrogant, as oſtentatious, and conceited, as any learned lady that ever lived? or, if a more phlegmatic temper prevented the effervеſcence of vanity from diſplaying itſelf in the ſame manner, it is ten to

one, that he was ſtill more inſufferable by his dogmatic pedanty and ſupercilioufneſs. The reaſon why ſuch characters are not ſo frequently to be met with amongſt men, is, that (in this country at leaſt) the education of boys is, in ſome degree, calculated to open, and gradually to prepare the mind for the reception of knowledge; that of girls, on the contrary, is from their very cradles, inimical to the cultivation of any one rational idea.

In the mental as in the material world, ſimilar cauſes will ever produce ſimilar effects; let the combination of ideas be attended to from the earlieſt period of life; let the mind be early taught to think; taught, to form a juſt eſtimate of the objects, within the reach of its obſervation; and appreciating every thing by its uſefulneſs, led to ſee, that *genius is leſs valuable than virtue*, and that the knowledge of every ſcience, and the attainment of every accompliſhment, ſinks into inſignificance, when compared to the uniform performance of any known duty. Will the mind, whether it belongs to male or female, that is thus prepared, be elated into arrogance, by learning the opinions of the people of different ages, even though taught to read them in the language in which they were originally written? will it become

leſs modeſt, leſs amiable, leſs engaging, for having been enlarged by this extent of information; or will it be leſs qualified for the performance of ſocial duties, becauſe it has been freed from the prejudices of ignorance, and taught to fill its place in the ſcale of rational beings? Surely, no; I need only mention the name of Lady Grey to give the fulleſt proof of the juſtneſs of my aſſertion. This younger ſiſter of the Ardent's, had, under the care of a mother, eminently qualified for the taſk, the advantage of juſt ſuch an education as I have deſcribed; but though to all the underſtanding and accompliſhments of her ſiſter, ſhe adds that brilliancy of imagination, of which the value is ſo apt to be over eſtimated by its poſſeſſors, ſhe is neither vain, oſtentatious, nor aſſuming. Accuſtomed to compare her actions, not with the triflers around her, but with the pure ſtandard of Chriſtian excellence, her virtues are all genuine. For inſtance, the quality of gentleneſs, which, in women, is ſeldom more than a paſſive tameneſs of ſpirit, that yields without ſtruggling to the encroachments of the turbulent and unworthy, is, in her, the ſpontaneous offſpring of true humility; it is the tranſcript of that wiſdom which is from above, pure and peaceable, and lovely!

—Modeſty is not in her the affectation of ſqueamiſh delicacy—it is the purity of the heart. Maternal fondneſs (and never was the heart of a mother more tenderly affectionate) is, like every other affection of her ſoul, put under the controul of reaſon. The blind indulgence, which would be prejudicial to the real intereſts of its object, is, by her, conſidered as a ſelfiſh gratification, not to be enjoyed, but at the expence of the future happineſs of her child; it is therefore wiſely reſtrained, though ſometimes at the expence of preſent feeling. Such tenderneſs, directed by ſuch wiſdom, is the neareſt poſſible imitation of the moſt amiable attributes of the divinity!—And who would put ſuch a woman as this, in compariſon with the moſt beautiful piece of inſipid ignorance, that ever opened its eyes upon the world? Is there a man who would prefer the vapid chatter of a pretty ideot, to the converſation of ſuch a woman? So good! ſo wiſe! ſo beautiful! Yes, my noble Rajah, ſhe is ſtill beautiful! though her eyes have loſt ſomewhat of that luſtre, which, but a few years ago, was the admiration of all beholders, they ſtill beam with animation and ſenſibility." Ah! my friend, cried I, you need ſay little to perſuade me of her beauty; the accompliſhments

and virtues of an ugly woman, can make little impreſſion even on the mind of a philoſopher.—My friend coloured, but before he could reply, a loud exploſion from the farther end of the room, burſt upon our ears, and filled us with momentary terror. In diſcourſing on Lady Grey, my friend had forgotten the neceſſary management of a retort, which, for want of his attention, burſt in pieces. I know not what were its contents, but they ſent forth ſuch ſuffocating effluvia, as, had I not been reſtrained by politeneſs, would quickly have driven me from the room.

When the ſmoke which followed the exploſion, was ſomewhat diſſipated, I obſerved my friend, ſtanding in a melancholy poſture, with claſped hands, and fixed eyes, ruminating on the misfortune that had befallen him. A courſe of experiments, the labour of many weeks, were by this unhappy accident, rendered abortive; it was a ſubject that could not immediately admit of conſolation. I therefore, for ſome time, preſerved the ſtricteſt ſilence. Juſt as I was about to open my lips with the voice of ſympathy, the philoſopher, who had never lifted his eyes from the remains of the broken veſſel, ſuddenly clapping his hands together, exclaimed in a tranſport of ecſtacy, "I ſee it! I ſee it!——Heavens!

what a diſcovery?——Never was there ſo fortunate an accident?" I was at firſt ſomewhat afraid that my friend's ſenſes had received a ſhock from this alarming incident; but was happily relieved from my apprehenſions, on being informed, that the appearances which the matter, contained in the retort, had aſſumed on its exploſion, gave a hint to the philoſopher, for the explanation of ſome phænomena hitherto unaccounted for. In a moment, that fine countenance (and never did Brahma beſtow upon a human ſoul, an index ſo intelligible) which had been ſo lately ſhaded by the cloud of deſpondency, was brightened by the emanations of joy, and irradiated by the ſmile of exultation and delight. I was not ſufficiently initiated in ſcience, to be able to appreciate the value of the diſcovery, which gave ſuch ecſtatic pleaſure to the mind of the philoſopher; but contemplated with rapture, the wiſdom of the immortal ſpirit, who when he ſpread the volume of Nature before his rational offſpring, paſſed this unalterable decree: "That to the mind, devoted to its peruſal, the corroſive paſſions ſhould be unknown. That it ſhould have power to aſſuage the tumults of the ſoul; to foſter the emotions of virtue; and to produce a ſpecies of enjoyment, peculiarly its

own!"—Such, O! Maandaara! ſuch are the advantages of ſcience!!

According to appointment, I went, a few evenings ago to Lady Ardent's rout. Doctor Severan had the goodneſs to accompany me; a piece of condeſcenſion, which, now that I know what ſort of a thing a rout is, I cannot but conſider as a very diſtinguiſhed compliment.

A rout is a ſpecies of penance, of which the pious Yogees of Hindooſtan never conceived an idea; if theſe people were not the profeſſors of a religion which prohibits the worſhip of the inferior deities, I ſhould ſay, it was a ſacrifice to the Goddeſs of Faſhion; a ſacrifice not of the joint of a finger, or a toe, as we are here told it is the cuſtom to preſent to that Goddeſs in ſome newly diſcovered countries *, but of every faculty of the ſoul, that diſtinguiſhes the rational from the brute creation. Theſe remain during the ceremony of the rout, in an abſolute ſtate of ſuſpenſion. You may imagine, my dear Maandaara, what a ſacrifice this muſt be—to people poſſeſſed of ſo much wiſdom, and who are ſo eminently qua-

* It is ſuppoſed by the Tranſlator, that the Rajah here alludes to a cuſtom ſaid to be practiſed in Otaheite. See Cook's Voyages.

liſied for the pleaſures of converſation. What a ſacrifice! to be deprived of the interchange of ideas, of every communication of ſentiment, and every advantage of underſtanding, and to be doomed to ſit ſtiffling in a crowded room, during the length of an evening, with no other employment, than that of turning over little bits of painted paper!

It is not ſurpriſing, that in ſuch circumſtances the countenances of theſe votaries of faſhion, ſhould ſo frequently be diſtinguiſhed by the inſipid ſtare of vacancy, or the lowering frowns of diſcontent. For my part, I could not help pitying them from my very ſoul; I was particularly concerned for a group of young females, who were placed on a ſopha in a corner of the room, and who, inſtead of cards, held each in their hand a ſmall fan, which they from time to time opened, and again ſhut in a very melancholy manner. As I contemplated their ſituation, with much compaſſion, wondering, whether ſilence had actually been impoſed upon them, as one of the duties of the ceremony, my feelings were effectually relieved by the entrance of three effeminate-looking youths, dreſſed in the military habit, whoſe pale-faces and puny figures, rendered it a matter of doubt, to which ſex they actually be-

longed, till one of them being ſaluted *Lord*, relieved me from the dilemma. Whether there was any thing exhilarating in the perfumes which theſe Saibs had plentifully beſtowed upon their perſons, I know not; but their appearance ſeemed to ſpread a ſudden ray of animation over the dejected Bibbys who in a moment began to ſpeak to each other with wonderful loquacity; the fans were opened and ſhut, with encreaſing celerity. The Chouries upon their heads, were with one conſent put into motion, waving like the graceful plumage of the Auney *, when it carries the meſſages of Camdeo; and their eyes, which had hitherto rolled with languid vacuity, from one head-dreſs to another, now turned their glances towards that part of the room, where the lady-like gentlemen ſtood. Two of theſe heroes, with a degree of fortitude, to which many more gallant-looking men would have been unequal, turning their backs upon the fair creatures, who ſo ſweetly ſolicited their attention; ſat down at a card-table, each placing himſelf oppoſite to a wrinkled Bibby, old enough to be his grandmother. The young Lord, either poſſeſ-

* A fabulous bird, frequently mentioned by the Poets of India, as the ambaſſador of love.

fing leſs reſolution than his companions, or not conſidering this ſort of penance neceſſary for the good of his ſoul, joined himſelf to the fan-playing party of the young ladies.—Dulneſs and melancholy, vaniſhed at his approach; every word he uttered, produced a ſimper on the pretty faces of his female audience; the ſimper, at length, encreaſed into a tittering laugh. Obſerving that they caſt their eyes to the oppoſite ſide of the apartment, I judged it was ſome object placed there that excited their riſibility; following the direction of their glances, I perceived a Lady with a remarkable pleaſant countenance, who had indeed no chourie upon her head, and who was in every particular leſs disfigured by dreſs, than any other perſon in the room. I was pondering in my own mind, how this modeſt and unaſſuming perſonage, could excite the riſibility of the fair group, when a lady who had for ſome time ſtood near them, apparently engaged in over-looking a card-table, turned round, and addreſſed them in the following manner: "When you, my lord and ladies, have ſufficiently amuſed yourſelves in ridiculing the dreſs of that excellent woman, I hope you will next proceed to her character. You cannot do better, than compare it with your own. I do aſſure you, her

dreſs is not ſo widely different from your's, as the furniture of either her head or heart. That very woman, with her flat cap and plain petticoat, has an underſtanding of the firſt quality; and a heart replete with every virtue. While ſhe has been cultivating the one, and exerciſing the other in the nobleſt manner; be ſo good as to aſk yourſelves, how you have been employed? but, perhaps, your obſervations, like thoſe of a monkey, can go no farther than the ornaments of the perſon? Then, poor things! who can blame you, for exerciſing the higheſt of your intellectual powers; and for aſſerting your claim to rationality, though even by the loweſt and moſt equivocal of its characteriſtics?"—You have beheld a flock of Paroquets baſking themſelves in the rays of the ſun, all exerting their little throats, and ſqualling and chattering with all their might: when, lo! a Cormorant, or other bird of prey has made its appearance, and in a moment, the clamorous voices of the little green-robed chatterers, has been huſhed in ſilence——becoming as mute as the vegetable tribe, under whoſe friendly leaves they ſought for ſhelter.

Such was the effect produced upon the pretty group of Bibbys, by this unexpected harangue; and, I confeſs, I par-

ticipated ſo much in their feelings, that I was not a little alarmed, when the orator turning with a look of ineffable contempt rom her diſmayed auditors, addreſſed herſelf to me.—Nor did it greatly tend to relieve me, when I diſcovered that it was *Miſs Ardent*, who thus did me the honour of introducing herſelf to my acquaintance. My friend, the philoſopher, had ſaid enough to frighten me, at the idea of holding any communication with a *learned Lady*. I found her, however, not quite ſo formidable as I had at firſt apprehended. She, indeed, ſoon found means not only to reconcile me to her company, but to render it quite charming. She directed the converſation to the delightful ſubject of my dear native country! at her deſire, I deſcribed to her the peculiar charms of the blooming landſcape, whoſe exhilarating beauties, gladden the hearts of the happy inhabitants of Almora. I painted to her imagination the immeaſurable foreſt, whoſe trees have their ſky-touching heads overſhadowed by the venerable mountains of Cummow: I talked of the thundering torrents which are daſhed from the ſtupendous rocks, and which delighted at their eſcape from the frozen North, run to hide themſelves in the boſom of Ganga. I told her of the names which

they aſſumed upon their rout, expatiated on the charming banks which adorned the courſe of the rapid Gumtry, and of the playful meanderings of the Gurra. I had likewiſe the honour of explaining to her, the preſent political ſtate of the country; it is a ſubject upon which, ſince I have been in England, I have ſeldom had any opportunity, and ſtill ſeldomer any ſatisfaction of converſing. In all that relates to our country, I have indeed found theſe weſtern lovers of ſcience, moſt deplorably ignorant. You may believe it impreſſed me with a very high idea of the ſuperior powers of Miſs Ardent's mind, when I found, that ſhe had paid particular attention to every thing connected with the hiſtory or literature of India. But even Miſs Ardent has her prejudices, and I did not find it a very eaſy matter to convince her, that the Mahhabaret was ſuperior to the Iliad of Homer: or that Calidas was a dramatic Poet equal in excellence to Shakeſpeare. You will ſmile at her prejudices; but conſider, my dear friend, what you would think of the arrogance of any foreigner, who ſhould have the preſumption to put the works of his countrymen in competition with thoſe divine Bards, and you will learn to make allowances for this Lady. She was ſurpriſed to hear that I had not

yet been to ſee the repreſentation of an Engliſh Natac, here called a play, and invited me to be of her party, to ſee the performance of one the following evening. I was charmed with the invitation; and did not fail in my attendance on the letter-loving Bibby, at the time appointed.

The building appropriated to this amuſement, belongs to the King, and is called his Theatre; and to it he ſends his ſervants for the diverſion of the public. They are not, however, paid by their Maſter, but, like all the ſervants of the Engliſh nobility, are paid *by the viſitors.* Nor are they ſo modeſt as ſome that I have ſeen, at the royal palaces and gardens, who never aſked for their wages, until they had gratified my curioſity; but theſe, ſtipulated for a certain ſum, and demanded it before they permitted me to enter.

My expectations in reſpect to the magnificence of the building, and the ſplendor of its decorations, were ſomewhat diſappointed: but upon the whole it is very well contrived, for ſeeing and hearing the performers.—In front of the ſtage is an aiſle, larger than that in the church, in which, the people are, however, treated with more reſpect, being all accommodated with ſeats: and I could

perceive, that *here* their marked approbation of any paſſage, excited ſome degree of attention in the great people, who ſat in the little pews above them: and although among theſe great people, ſome appeared to regard the Natac, as little as the ſermon, talking and whiſpering, almoſt as much at the theatre, as they had done in church; yet the performance was here, in general, much better attended to by all who had the enjoyment of their ſenſes. You will think this a ſtrange exception—but you muſt know, that a part of the royal theatre, is peculiarly appropriated to the reception of a ſpecies of lunatics, called Bucks, who are indeed, very noiſy and troubleſome; but who are treated with an amazing degree of lenity and forbearance, by the benevolent people, who beſtow upon them the pity that is due to their unhappy ſituation.

Great part of the entertainment ſeemed, indeed, calculated for their amuſement, as it is well known that the eye can be gratified by the diſplay of gaudy colours, even where the mind is deſtitute of the gift of reaſon. This reſpect to folly, was, however, in my opinion, carried too far; and though I ſhould have been well pleaſed to have ſeen the grown children amuſed, by the exhibition of a few ſhowy pictures and other mummery, I could

not approve of turning the infirmities of old age into ridicule, for their amuſement. I had fooliſhly thought that all Engliſh plays were like the plays of Shakſpeare; but, alas! I begin to apprehend, that they are not all quite ſo good! inſtead of thoſe portraits of the paſſions, which Nature ſpontaneouſly acknowledges for her own, I only ſee exaggerated repreſentations of tranſient and incidental folly. Whether it be owing to the peculiar taſte of the exalted Omrah, whoſe office it is to examine the merits of the Natacs that are performed by his Majeſty's ſervants, or to the limited genius of modern Poets, I know not, but it appears evident, that all dramatic writers in this country, are now confined to one plot: A fooliſh old man devoted to avarice, has a daughter that is petulant and diſobedient, or a ſon of the ſame character; perhaps, two or three of theſe old men, differing from each other in the ſize and ſhape of the covering of the head, called Wigs, are brought into the ſame piece, together with an old unmarried ſiſter, who always believes herſelf to be young and handſome. After the young people have for ſome time exerciſed their ingenuity in deceiving the vigilance of the old ones, and have ſucceſsfully expoſed to public ridicule, the

bodily infirmities and mental failings of their ſeveral parents, they are paired for marriage, and thus the piece concludes. This compoſition is called a *Sentimental Comedy*, and is ſucceeded by what is termed a Farce. In the Farce, his Majeſty's ſervants make faces, and perform many droll tricks for the diverſion of the audience, who ſeem particularly pleaſed with their exertions in this way, which they applaud with repeated peals of laughter.—And ſurely, it muſt be highly gratifying to the imperial mind, to ſee the people pleaſed at ſo cheap a rate.

The firſt time I went to the theatre, was, as I have already informed you, in company with Miſs Ardent, who was much diſappointed, that the illneſs of the royal ſervants ſhould have prevented the repreſentation of a new piece, written by an Engliſh officer in the ſervice of the Eaſt India Company, which, in the opinion of this Lady, is a piece of much intrinſic merit. It is taken from the hiſtory of Zingis, and adorned with the terror-ſtriking ſpirit of Zamouca, which blazes throughout the whole of the performance; to me, I muſt confeſs, the preſentation of ſuch a piece would have been more charming, than either the leſſon of morality, given in the ſentimental comedy, or the fooleries

of the farce; but I was informed by Miſs Ardent, that I muſt be cautious how I give utterance to ſuch an opinion, as nothing is now deemed ſo barbarous as the energy of good ſenſe.—" If your highneſs would have the people of this country," continued ſhe, " entertain a good idea of your taſte, you muſt give all your admiration to hollow, but high-ſounding ſentiment. Sentiment, and ſing-ſong, are the faſhion of the day. That is is ſo, we are much indebted to the care and talents of our modern Bards, who by ſuch compoſitions as the preſent, ſpoil and contaminate the national taſte." " Pardon me," cried a gentlemen, who ſtood by, " but in my opinion, the ſtage does not ſo much form, as *reflect* the national taſte. Poetry has always reached her maturity, while her votaries were in a ſemi-barbarous ſtate: with the progreſs of civilization; ſhe has gradually declined; and if we take the rapidity of her decay in this country as the criterion of our refinement, we may proudly pronounce ourſelves one of the moſt poliſhed nations of the earth!"—Miſs Ardent's carriage being announced, put an end to the converſation; but before ſhe ſtept into it, ſhe invited me to dine with her on the following day. " What!" you will ſay, " a ſingle, unprotected woman,

invite you to her houſe?—Shameful violation of decorum!"—But conſider, my friend—cuſtom, that mighty legiſlator, who iſſues the laws of propriety to the different nations of the earth, maketh that appear amiable and proper in the eyes of the people of one country, which in thoſe of another, is criminal and abſurd: and ſo eaſily doth cuſtom reconcile us to her capricious decrees, that I received the invitation, and went to the houſe of Miſs Ardent, with as little perturbation as if ſhe had been a gentleman in petticoats.

She received me in an apartment devoted to literature and contemplation, from which it takes the name of *ſtudy*; the walls of the room were lined with books, all ſhining in coats of gloſſy leather, richly ornamented with leaf of gold. That pains which in Aſia is beſtowed in decorating the illuminated page, being in England, all given to the outſide covering, which, it muſt be confeſſed, gives to the ſtudy a very ſplendid appearance.

Two gentlemen had arrived before me, and were already engaged in converſation.—Theſe, as Miſs Ardent informed me in a whiſper, were great *critics*. The word was new to me, and I did not chooſe to aſk for an explanation, but ſeeing a huge book upon the table, which I

knew to be an explainer of hard words, I had immediate recourſe to it, and found a Critic to be "*a man ſkilled in the art of judging of literature.*" What information might I not expect to receive from ſuch infallible judges, who, as the ſubſequent deſcription informed me, muſt be qualified, "*nicely to diſcriminate, and ably to judge, the beauties and faults of writings.*" —The name of a great author, whoſe works I had read with ſatisfaction and delight, met my ear, and the fire of expectation was inſtantly kindled in my boſom. Conſcious that I could only ſkim the ſurface of that ocean of wiſdom, contained in the work of this great moraliſt, I now hoped to ſee ſuch hidden gems produced to view, as had eſcaped my feeble ſearch: but, judge of my mortification, at being informed only of the ſize of his wig!—Both the critics produced a thouſand little inſtances of the oddities of his manner, the peculiarity of his dreſs, and the irritability of his temper. But as to the excellence of his precepts, the ſtrength of his arguments, or the ſublimity of his ſentiments—the critics ſaid not a word!

The name of this author led to that of another—a Poet to whoſe verſes Miſs Ardent gave the epithet of *charming*. Her learned gueſts, though, in ge-

neral, obſequiouſly ſubmiſſive to her opinion, did not, in this inſtance, ſeem to coincide with her.—But, inſtead of pointing out the defects of his compoſition, they only mentioned the badneſs of his taſte, of which they gave an irrefragable proof, in his preferring *a roaſted* potatoe to a cheſnut! Miſs Ardent, who did not ſeem pleaſed to have the taſte of her favourite poet called in queſtion, abruptly turned the converſation, and addreſſing herſelf to me, told me, ſhe ſhould ſoon have the pleaſure of introducing me to ſome gentlemen of diſtinguiſhed talents and acknowledged merit, whoſe names I had probably heard.—She then mentioned three of the moſt celebrated writers of the preſent day, every one of whoſe works I had had the advantage of reading with Delomond, in the courſe of our voyage. While ſhe yet ſpoke the Chubdar re-echoed the names of theſe celebrated men; they entered, and paid the tribute of reſpect to this patroneſs of ſcience, who, when ſhe was ſeated among them, appeared in my eyes, like the Goddeſs Serreſwate, ſurrounded by the gems of the court of Vicramaditya.

Think, Maandaara! think, what I muſt have felt, at the ſight of four live authors! You may well believe, that I could not

find myſelf in the immediate preſence of ſo many learned perſonages, without experiencing a conſiderable degree of agitation. I remained immerſed in ſilent awe and breathleſs expectation. Surely, ſaid I to myſelf, the converſation of men who are capable of writing books, muſt be very different from that of common mortals!

One of them opened his mouth—I liſtened with avidity—and heard—that the morning had been remarkable rainy. —How beautiful is this condeſcenſion, ſaid I again to myſelf, in one ſo wiſe! —The Chubdar again entered, it was to announce that the dinner was upon the table. I followed Miſs Ardent and her learned gueſts into the apartments deſtined for this repaſt, where, according to the barbarous cuſtom of the country, they ſat down to eat at one table, and confined their converſation while they remained at it, to eulogiums on the good things ſet before them, of which, in compliment (no doubt) to the miſtreſs of the feaſt, they devoured a goodly quantity. While they were thus employed, I retired to the ſopha at the other end of the room, where I contemplated with aſtoniſhment, how much men of genius could eat. At length, the long-protracted feaſt was finiſhed, the mangled re-

mains of the bipeds and the quadrupeds, the fiſhes of the ſea, the vegetables of the earth, and the golden fruits of the garden, were carried off by the domeſtics; a variety of wines ſupplied their places upon the table—the liquid ruby flowed, and theſe diſciples of the poet of Shiraz ſeemed to unite with him in regard to the ſovereign efficacy of the ſparkling contents *of the goblet.

* The alluſion is taken from one of the odes of Hafiz, which, as it does not appear among thoſe ſelected by Mr. Nott, for his very elegant Tranſlation, we think the following LITERAL one, may not prove unacceptable:

1. The ſeaſon of ſpring is arrived, let the ſparkling goblet go round!
2. Seize, O ye youths, the fleeting hour, and enjoy the extatic delight of the company of the fawn-eyed daughters of love.
3. Boy! fill out the wine, and let the liquid ruby flow, for it is it alone that poureth the oil of gladneſs into the hearts of the unfortunate, and is the healing balm of the wounds of the afflicted.
4. Leave the corroding thorns of wordly cares, and the anxiety of ambition, to immortalize the names of Cyrus and Alexander.
5. Let me indulge in my favourite wine, and ſee which of us ſhall ſooneſt obtain the object of his deſires.
6. Let mine ear liſten to the melody of the lute and the cymbal, and mine eyes be charmed with the fair daughters of Circaſſia.
7. Go, O my ſoul, and give thyſelf to joy, for it is needleſs to anticipate to-day the ſorrows of to-morrow.

So much has been ſaid and ſung on the inſpiring powers of wine, that I anxiouſly watched its effects on theſe men of learning.—But, unfortunately for wit and me, no ſooner were the bottles ſet upon the table, than the ſubject of politics was introduced; a ſubject which to me, is ever dull and barren of delight. To Miſs Ardent, it appeared otherwiſe; ſhe entered with warmth and energy into the diſcuſſion, and ſpoke of miniſters and their meaſures, of the management of wars, and the intereſts of nations, in ſuch a deciſive manner, as proved her qualified to become the Vizir of an Empire.

Not ſeeing the converſation likely to take a turn to any other ſubject, and conſidering that the preſence of a ſtranger might throw ſome reſtraint on the diſcuſſion of affairs of ſtate, I took my leave; and muſt confeſs, that I returned from this banquet of reaſon, not altogether ſatisfied with my entertainment.

As after having loſt a game at Cheſs, it is my cuſtom to ponder on the paſt moves, until I find out the falſe ſtep that led to my defeat, ſo do I ruminate on the diſappointment of expected felicity, till I make a diſcovery of the ſource from which it has flowed. In doing ſo, I am almoſt

always certain of seeing it traced to the fallacy of ill-grounded expectation. Why said I, should I have expected more from an author, than from any other man of sense? When a man has given his thoughts a form upon paper, and submitted them in that shape to the perusal of the world, is he from thenceforth to be obliged to speak in laboured sentences, and to utter only the aphorisms of wisdom? Carrying my reasons upon this subject, a little farther, I was almost tempted to conclude, that the manners of even a female author, might not differ much from that of other women! but this, you will think, was carrying the matter rather too far.

The amiable, the engaging Delomond, has this morning left us. His departure is like a dark cloud, which in early spring deforms the face of nature, and checks the gaiety of the season with the sudden chill of a wintery storm. It has particularly affected me, as it has at once shut out the prospect of prosperity, which, as I had flattered myself, was fast opening on my friend, and deprived me of the sunshine of his presence. But, perhaps, my disappointment with regard to the success of Delomond, is more in proportion to the eagerness of my wishes, than to the solidity of my hope. The

mind, which like the delicate leaves of the Mimoſa, ſhrinks from every touch, is ill calculated to ſolicit the aſſiſtance of the powerful, or gain the favour of the great. The very looks of the proſperous, it conſtrues into arrogance; and is equally wounded by the civility which appears to condeſcend, and by the inſolence which wears the form of contempt.

From all theſe multiplied mortifications ſome, perhaps, real, and ſome only imaginary, has Delomond haſtily retired: and relinquiſhing the purſuit of fortune, and the pleaſures of ſociety, devotes his future life to the indolent repoſe of obſcurity. But, alas! how ſhall he, who was diſcomfited by the firſt thorny branch which hung acroſs the path of fortune, ſtruggle through the ſharp briers of adverſity?—Can a mind, formed for the happineſs of domeſtic life, endowed with ſuch exquiſite reliſh for the refined enjoyment of taſte and ſentiment, find comfort in a joyleſs ſtate of ſolitude! or, what is worſe than ſolitude, the company of the rude and ignorant?—Ah! my amiable friend, thou wilt find, when it is too late, that the road to happineſs is not to be entered by the gate of faſtidious refinement.

The firſt care that occupied my mind, after my arrival in London, was to procure a ſafe conveyance for the preſents which I had intended to lay at the feet of the ſiſter of Percy.

I have juſt received an anſwer to the letter that accompanied them.—It is ſuch as I ſhould have expected from her who was worthy the eſteem of ſuch a brother. But, alas! it is written with the pen of ſorrow, and blotted by the tears of affliction. The amiable old man, who ſupplied to her the place of a father, who loved her with ſuch tenderneſs, and was beloved by her with ſuch a degree of filial affection, is gone to the dark manſions of death. She has left the happy abode of her infancy, and her dwelling is now among ſtrangers.—This ſhe particularly deplores, on account of depriving her of the power of ſhewing the ſenſe ſhe entertains of my friendſhip to her brother in any other way than by words alone. Her expreſſions of gratitude have the energetic eloquence of genuine ſenſibility; they are greatly beyond what I have merited; but, when I conſider the tender reflections that excited them—my heart melts into ſympathy.

Alas! it is eaſy to perceive, that this amiable young woman is not to be numbered with the happy. Perhaps, her

preſent ſituation is peculiarly unfortunate. Perhaps, ſhe has there been deſtined to experience the cold reception, the unfeeling neglect, of ſome little, narrow, ſelfiſh mind, to whoſe attentions ſhe had been particularly recommended by her departed relatives. Perhaps, ſome friend of her brother.—But, no; the *real* friends of Percy, were like himſelf, noble, generous, and good. Far from being capable of diſhonouring the memory of their friend, by neglecting to perform their rites of hoſpitality to his ſiſter, they have taken an intereſt in her feelings, and by acts of kindneſs and attention, have endeavoured to promote her happineſs. And ſurely for no act of kindneſs can the ſiſter of Percy, be ungrateful to the friends of her brother!

The loſs of Delomond, and the melancholy letter of Miſs Percy, dwelt upon my ſpirits, and ſunk them to a ſtate of unuſual depreſſion. I ſpent the night in ſadneſs, and early in the morning, went in ſearch of my friend, the philoſopher, whoſe converſation is to me, as the rod of Kriſhna, which no ſooner touched the eyes of Arjoon, than he ſaw the figure of truth, as it appears unto the Gods themſelves. This amiable friend, had of late been ſo much engroſſed by his ſcientific purſuits, that I had enjoyed

little of his company. He received me with an air of unuſual vivacity. "When I laſt ſaw you," ſaid he, "I am afraid I muſt have appeared ſtrangely inattentive; but, in truth, my mind was at that time very much embarraſſed, and almoſt ſolely occupied on a ſubject, which I did not then chooſe to ſpeak of, but which I ſhall now fully explain. You muſt know, that I had lately entered on a courſe of experiments more intereſting than any in which, I have ever yet engaged, and from which I had no doubt, a moſt important diſcovery would reſult. I found it, however, altogether impoſſible to go on without the aſſiſtance of an additional apparatus, the price of which was far more than I could afford. It was fifty pounds? Little leſs than a quarter of a year's rent of my whole eſtate! What was I to do? beſpeak it of the artizan, without having the money ready to pay for it? This would be nothing leſs than an act of wilful diſhoneſty, for diſhoneſty, either to oneſelf or others, running in debt always is.

Could I hope to ſave it by retrenching any of my ordinary expences? I calculated every thing, even to living on bread and water, but found it impoſſible. I had, then, nothing for it, but to relinquiſh my plan entirely, and ſince I could

not carry it on myſelf, to communicate my ideas on the ſubject to ſome more opulent philoſopher, by whoſe means the benefit of the diſcovery might be ſtill given to the world. " Ah! my friend," interrupted I, " I now ſee that you have no regard for me, or you would have given me the enviable pleaſure, the delight of being able to ſay to myſelf, that I too, ignorant as I am, I too have contributed my feeble aid to the advancement of Science, and the benefit of Society." " you are very good," returned the Doctor, " and, I have no doubt of your generoſity. But as the action of heat evaporates fluids, ſo does the borowing of money, in my opinion, deſtroy the independence of the ſoul: that independence which gives life and energy to virtue, without which, it becomes incapable of being exerted to any truly uſeful purpoſe, No; what I cannot effect by the means which Divine Providence has put into my power, I think is not intended by Providence that I ſhould effect at all."

" I was therefore quietly employing myſelf in unfixing that great retort; when this morning, a letter was brought me from my agent in the country, informing me of his having obtained for me, from a neighbouring Squire, the ſum of fifty

pounds; for damages done me, by taking through miſtake, a piece of my ground into one of his incloſures. Which ſum, he incloſed to me in a letter. Thus, you ſee, my dilemma is quite at an end. I ſhall now go on with ſpirit; and as I need loſe no more time, I am juſt going into the city, to give the neceſſary directions to the work-people; who, if they are any way diligent, may have the whole apparatus completely finiſhed in a week." As he ſpoke, I contemplated with delight, the glow of pleaſure which animated his finely expreſſive countenance; a pleaſure ſo different from the ſparkling extacy of paſſion, that merely to have beheld it, would have been ſufficient to convince the moſt devoted ſenſualiſt of the ſuperiority of *mind*, over every enjoyment of mere ſenſe.

Having accepted my offer of attending him, we were juſt about to depart, when, prevented by the entrance of a Lady, whoſe air and manner had in them ſomewhat ſo intereſting, that the unſeaſonableneſs of the interruption was ſoon forgotten. Grief and anxiety were painted on her countenance. Every feature was labouring with ill-ſuppreſſed emotion, and when ſhe attempted to ſpeak, the tremor of her voice prevented her words from being diſtinctly heard. I,

however, ſoon gathered from her broken ſentences, and the ſympathetic replies of the philoſopher. That ſhe was the wife of an old ſchool-fellow, one of his early and eſteemed friends—That ſhe had been born to affluence, but forfeited the favour of her family by her marriage? her huſband having virtue and talents, but no fortune. His talents, however, had been turned to good account; he had employed himſelf in drawing plans of the eſtates of the affluent, which his taſte taught him to embelliſh in ſuch a manner, as gratified the vanity of his employers, by the admiration it excited. He was contented with the profit, while they enjoyed the praiſe.

"We were doing charmingly," ſaid the Lady, "and had the proſpect of ſoon getting above the world, and paying off all the little debts, which at our firſt ſetting out in life, neceſſity had compelled us to contract. When in the beginning of laſt Summer, my huſband was ſeized with a fever, which laſted ſeven weeks; and left him ſo weak, that many more elapſed, before he was able to go abroad. During that time, he loſt ſome of his moſt advantageous ſituations; gentlemen who had employed him, having in the time of his illneſs, contracted with others. Winter came on, and no funds were pro-

vided againſt its wants; my huſband, whoſe tenderneſs and affection for his family, ſeemed to be encreaſed by the difficulty he found in procuring their ſupport, had a genius fruitful in reſources. In thoſe months, when the ſeaſon neceſſarily put a ſtop to his employments, he wrote for the printer of a periodical publication, in which work, he taught me to aſſiſt him; and thus by our united endeavours, we contrived ſtill to keep up a decent appearance; and to maintain with frugality our four little ones, whoſe innocent endearments repaid all our trouble, and made us when we ſat down to our little meal, forget the labour by which it had been earned. Ah! my poor babes! it is your ſufferings, that, more than his own, now rings your father's heart!

"But where is now my friend?" interrupted Severan, "Is he well? What can I do to ſerve him? Where can I ſee him?"

"Alas! he is in priſon!" returned the Lady. "He is in a loathſome, diſmal priſon!—deprived of light, of liberty, of every comfort, and enjoyment; and his dear children, his pretty darlings, of whom he uſed to be ſo fond, they too muſt go, muſt be nurſed in the abode of miſery, and made familiar with every ſpecies of wretchedneſs!"—Here tears came to her

relief, and for ſome time choaked her utterance.

At length, recovering herſelf, and aſſuming an air of dejected compoſure, "I beg your pardon," continued ſhe, (obſerving the marks of ſenſibility, that overſpread the benignant countenance of our friend)—"I did not mean to diſtreſs you, but it is ſo few that can feel for one's affliction;—and the voice of ſympathy is ſo grateful to the wounded heart—that I could not deny myſelf the conſolation of ſpeaking to you. But things may yet go better.—My huſband has enough owing to him, to enable him to pay every one. But the misfortune is, that his debtors are all people of fortune, whoſe favour would be for ever loſt, by an untimely application for money; and ſhould the news of his having been impriſoned for debt, once get abroad, he is ruined for ever! no perſon of faſhion will ever employ him more!

"I cannot think ſo," ſaid the Doctor, with his wonted mildneſs; "we ſee daily inſtances of the high favour that is ſhewn to people of ruined circumſtances; many of whom I have known, even when worthleſs and depraved, to meet with attention and ſupport from people of elevated rank and faſhion?"

" Ah! Sir," replied the Lady, " theſe were people who had ſquandered their fortunes in luxury and diſſipation; ſuch, indeed, ſeldom fail to meet with patrons and benefactors; but, it is far otherwiſe with the poor man, who has been ſtruggling with adverſity, and employing his efforts, for the maintenance of a virtuous wife and family: when he fails, he is conſidered as an object unworthy of notice; his ſituation, creates no intereſt. His wretchedneſs, excites no commiſeration:" —" But your own family, my dear Madam —they have it in their power to extricate you from every difficulty; will you permit me to apply to them in your behalf?"

" Alas! Sir," I fear it would be in vain, they are too fond of money, to give it to thoſe who have none. You know how I offended them by my marriage; yet, had my huſband ſucceeded in the world, and made a fortune, *mine* would not have been witheld from him. It would have been given, if we had not wanted it; but, now that we are reduced to poverty, I have no hopes of aſſiſtance, from any of my friends. Yet would I thank you, for making trial of an application to them, if they, were in town— but they are not. They are all at York, except one Aunt, who is, indeed, very rich ſhe is alſo very religious and very

charitable, but makes it a rule, never to give aſſiſtance to any, who are not of her own ſect."

"Then," cried Severan, with unuſual warmth, "whatever are her profeſſions, ſhe is a ſtranger to the religion of Jeſus Chriſt! But, you have not told me the amount of the debt, for which your huſband is confined; is it not conſiderable?"

"Alas! yes," returned the lady. "It is more than forty pounds, and, what with the bailiff's and the jailor's fees, will, I dare ſay, arife to little leſs than fifty!"

"Fifty pounds!" repeated the philoſopher. "And fifty pounds would releaſe your huſband from a jail. Fifty pounds would reſtore a father to his infant family, and make the heart of a virtuous woman rejoice. It is the nobleſt of all experiments!—And deteſted be the purſuit, that would ſtand in the way of the happineſs of a fellow-creature. My good Madam," continued he, addreſſing himſelf to the Lady, who looked aſtoniſhed at the incoherence of his expreſſions, "you muſt know, that I this morning made a miſtake; I thought that Providence had ſent me fifty pounds, to enable me to purſue a philoſophical diſcovery, on which I had vainly ſet my

heart; but I now find, it was for a nobler purpoſe; it was to contribute to the happineſs of an unfortunate family; here it is; and all I deſire, is that you would conſider me only as the agent, and keep your thanks for him who ſent it."

The various emotions of aſtoniſhment, doubt, gratitude, and joy, which took poſſeſſion of the poor Lady's boſom, ſtruggled for utterance, and at length found vent in tears.

The effect upon my feelings, was too powerful to be ſupported. I left the room, and when I returned, found my friend adviſing with the Lady, on the ſteps neceſſary to be taken for her huſband's releaſe. I had from the commencement of our acquaintance, regarded the philoſopher as the firſt of human beings. I now looked up to him as ſomething more. To help a fellow-creature in diſtreſs, is the inſtinctive impulſe of benevolence; but to ſacrifice for the good of others, the darling purſuit of one's life! to give up on that account the favourite, the cheriſhed object of one's mind! this belongs only to the philoſophy of Jeſus. It was now, that I underſtood what cutting off the right hand, and plucking out the right eye, truly meant. But ah! my friend, if this is really the re-

ligion of Chriſt, how falſely are people often called Chriſtians!

On the arrival of the man of the law, whom the Doctor had ſent for to conduct the buſineſs, we all ſet out with the Lady, for the place of her huſband's confinement.

When we arrived at the great, gloomy manſion, Doctor Severan thinking it indelicate to go immediately into the preſence of his friend, ſent his lawyer with the lady, to inform her huſband of his liberation, and in the mean time, indulged my curioſity with a ſight of the priſon.

You have ſeen the dungeons in which the Muſſulmans confine their malefactors, and in which their priſoners of war are often doomed to ſuffer the lingering torture of deſpair; to inhale the noxious vapours of peſtilence, and to pine in all the miſeries of diſeaſe and famine. But after what I have ſaid of Chriſtian charity, you will, no doubt, think it impoſſible that in a Chriſtian country, ſimilar places ſhould be found. This, indeed, at firſt ſight appears very inexplicable; but it only ſerves to confirm me in the truth of my conjecture, reſpecting *a new revelation*, a ſupplementary code of Chriſtian laws and Chriſtian precepts, which, in many reſpects, muſt very eſſentially differ from the old one.

In this new goſpel, I have every reaſon to believe, from all that I have obſerved ſince my abode in England, that poverty is conſidered as one of the moſt heinous of crimes. It is accordingly by the *Chriſtians of the new ſyſtem*, not only ſtigmatiſed with a degree of infamy, but by their very laws, and under the immediate inſpection of their ſage magiſtrates, it is puniſhed in the moſt exemplary manner. The abhorrence in which this crime is held by thoſe Chriſtian legiſlators, is, indeed, evident throughout the tenor of their laws.

Can a perſon contrive by villainy, to poſſeſs himſelf of the eſtate of another, provided it can be clearly proved, that *poverty* had no ſhare in inſtigating him to the offence, the law is ſatisfied with ſimple reſtitution. But, ſhould a poor ſtarving wretch, put forth his audacious hand to ſatisfy the calls of hunger, or ſtill the clamorous demands of an infant family, he is condemned to death, or doomed to everlaſting wretchedneſs. You who are prejudiced in favour of the mild ordinances of our revered Pundits, will, perhaps, think it unjuſt, that to the miſerable mortal who ſteals the value of twenty rupees, and to him who boldly ventures on plundering the wealth of a family, adding murder to the crime of robbery, the ſame puniſhment ſhould be

allotted; but you will admire the principle upon which the laws of these new Christians in this case proceeds. It throws the crime of poverty into the scale, which instantly settles the balance.

Even when poverty constitutes the sole offence, nothing is more equitable than the punishments which proceed in regular gradation, and correspond in exact proportion to the degree in which the crime exists. For instance, within the massy walls of this prison, whose iron gates open to receive the reeking murderer, the midnight thief, and all those miserable out casts of society, who, lost to every principle of shame, every feeling of humanity, have sunk into all the brutality of vice; those guilty of the crime of poverty, are likewise immersed. But think not that they are all equally wretched. No; those who can afford to defraud their creditors, are suffered by these wise legislators, to live in a degree of luxury. Those who can save enough from the wreck of former times, to pay for their accommodation, may still enjoy some comparative degree of comfort. But, it is those wretches who have lost their *all*, and are alike destitute of friends and fortune—it is they who are doomed to suffer the bitterness of confinement, in all its horrors.

It is true, that ſome who follow the old ſyſtem of Chriſtianity, as it was taught by Jeſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles, by whom poverty is not conſidered as ſo unpardonable a crime, have exerted their endeavours for relieving the ſufferings of their fellow-creatures, who for ſmall ſums, are ſhut up in theſe dreary abodes of wretchedneſs. But notwithſtanding their endeavours, notwithſtanding the zealous efforts, the heart-touching remonſtrances of one of thoſe Chriſtians of the old ſchool, who devoted his life to the children of misfortune*; ſtill in theſe priſons, many thouſands of the inhabitants of this land of freedom, are left to pine out a miſerable exiſtence, alike uſeleſs to themſelves and to ſociety. Many, at whoſe birth the voice of congratulation has been raiſed, and over whoſe infant forms the tears of parental tenderneſs have been fondly ſhed, are here ſuffered to languiſh, unnoticed and unknown.

As for thoſe wretches who have committed ſuch offences againſt ſociety, as all nations upon earth have deemed criminal, they are here held in ſuch juſt

* We ſuppoſe the Rajah points at the benevolent exertions of Mr. Howard.

abhorrence, that it is not thought ſufficient to viſit their ſins with mere *temporal puniſhment*, but every poſſible pains is taken to preſerve them in ſuch a ſtate of wickedneſs, as may give them every poſſible chance of being, according to the faith of the lawgivers, *miſerable to all eternity*.

This, you may, perhaps, eſteem rather an unjuſtifiable degree of ſeverity.—But conſider, O benevolent Maandaara, that by the old Chriſtian Shaſter, none are excluded from the hopes of mercy, who ſeek it by ſincere repentance. Now nothing is more probable, than that many of thoſe miſerable beings, who have been unwittingly ſwept into the torrent of vice, might, when they find themſelves ſhipwrecked on its barren ſhores, gladly liſten to the voice that would conduct them to the path of peace and virtue. If kept in a ſtate of ſeparation from the bad, and favoured with means of inſtruction from the good, this would, no doubt, often be the caſe. But then conſider what might be the conſequence: perhaps, ſome of theſe vile felons might come to have a higher ſeat in Heaven, than ſome of the proud, and jealous guardians of the laws, which had condemned them upon earth. The idea is not to be endured with patience! and to prevent

any poſſibility of its being realized, the poor trembling wretch, new to vice, and whoſe mind is not yet hardened in iniquity, no ſooner commits (or is ſaid to have committed) the moſt trifling offence, that ſtands within the cogniſance of the law, than, hurled into the ſociety of thoſe veterans in ſin, of whoſe repentance there is little reaſon to be afraid, the unfortunate offender is gradually trained to an equal degree of depravity.

Thus, the door of mercy is for ever ſhut! the returning path to virtue is barricaded, and ſo filled up by the briers and the thorns, which theſe new Chriſtians have thrown in the way, that it becomes quite inviſible; and leſt reflection ſhould point it out, intoxicating liquors are allowed in all priſons to be diſtributed in ſufficient quantities, to prevent the moſt diſtant apprehenſions of ſuch an event. Thus do theſe enlightened people, exert their endeavours to fill the regions of Nareyka!!

As for the philoſopher, who, I need not tell you, is a Chriſtian, according to the old Goſpel, he deprecates the whole ſyſtem, and was ſo much ſhocked at the ſight of the young victims, who are here devoted to vice, in order that they may be afterwards immolated on the altars of juſtice; that no cordial leſs powerful

than the ſight of the happineſs he had himſelf created, would have had efficacy to reſtore his mind to any degree of compoſure.

Before I conclude this epiſtle, I muſt entreat you, to ſend for the good and pious Bramin Sheermaal;—tell him, that my heart reproaches me, for the injuſtice I was guilty of towards him: I implore his pardon, for the incredulity with which I regarded his account of the conduct of Chriſtians.—Experience has now taught me to acknowledge, that his words were dictated by truth, and his obſervations emanated from wiſdom.

All that I have written, thou wilt not, perhaps, think it proper to read to Zamarcanda; many parts of it, ſhe certainly could not underſtand; but, I requeſt, thou wouldſt aſſure her, that the love of her brother is undiminiſhed—I embrace my ſon—and implore upon him, the bleſſing of all the benignant Dewtahs!—May the fortunes of Maandaara, be eſtabliſhed for ever!—What can I ſay more.

LETTER XIV.

SINCE I laſt took up the reed of friendſhip, my heart has been fretted with vexation, and my ſoul chilled with aſtoniſhment. Will the friend of Zaarmilla believe it poſſible, that I ſhould have found fraud and falſehood, venality and corruption, even in that court-protected vehicle of public information, that pure ſource of intelligence, called a Newſpaper?

The manner in which I made the diſagreeable diſcovery, was, to me, no leſs extraordinary, than the diſcovery itſelf. I went, as uſual, yeſterday morning, to ſpend an hour at the neighbouring coffee-houſe, and, on entering it, was ſurpriſed to find myſelf the object of univerſal attention. Every eye was turned towards me; ſome few ſeemed to regard me with a look of contempt; but the general expreſſion was that of pity and compaſſion. I had advanced to a box, and called for a newſpaper, but was heſitating whether I ſhould retire, or ſtay to peruſe its contents; when a gentleman, whom I obſerved to eye me with particular eager-

neſs, approaching me with much formality, begged leave to enquire, whether I was indeed the Rajah of Almora, a native Prince of Rohi'cund? On being anſwered in the affirmative, the gentleman, again bowing to the ground, thus proceeded: "I hope your highneſs will not attribute it to any want of reſpect, that I have thus preſumed to intrude myſelf into your preſence. I entertain too much reſpect, for whatever is illuſtrious in birth, or honourable in rank, or dignified in title, or exalted in authority, to do any thing derogatory to its greatneſs. I am but too conſcious of the prejudice which your highneſs muſt inevitably entertain againſt this nation, to hope that you will look upon any individual belonging to it, without ſuſpicion and abhorrence! But I hope to convince you, in ſpite of the reaſons you have had to the contrary, that we are not a *nation* of monſters. Some virtue ſtill remains among us, confined to me, and my honourable friends, it is true; but we, Sir, are Engliſhmen. Engliſhmen, capable of bluſhing at the nefarious practices of delegated authority. Engliſhmen, who have not been completely embowelled of our natural entrails; our hearts, and galls, and ſpleens, and livers, have not been forcibly torn from our

bodies, and their places ſupplied by ſhawls and lacks, and nabob-ſhips, and dewannes! We have real hearts of fleſh and blood, within our boſoms. Hearts, which bleed at the recital of human miſery, and feel for the woes of your unhappy country, with all the warmth of unſophiſticated virtue." Perceiving my intention to ſpeak, "I know, Sir, what you would ſay," cried he, with vehemence: "You would tell me, that your hatred to the Engliſh race, was founded in nature and in juſtice.—You would tell me, that it is *we* who have deſolated your Empire, who have turned the fruitful and delicious garden of Rohilcund, into a waſte and howling wilderneſs.—*We*, who have extirpated the noble race of warriors, who were your kind protectors! your indulgent lords! your beneficent friends!—to whom you paid a proud ſubmiſſion; a dignified obedience; a ſubordination more deſirable than the tumultuous ſpirit of the moſt exalted freedom!" Again I attempted to ſpeak.—"Ah!" cried he, in a ſtill louder tone, "you need not deſcribe to me, the ravages you have ſeen committed; the inſults you have ſuſtained! You need not tell me, that your friends have been ſlaughtered: your country plundered; your houſes burned; your land laid waſte; your Zenana diſhonoured: and

the favourite, the lovely, the virtuous wife of your affections, perhaps, torn from your agonizing boſom!" This was a chord not to be touched, even by the rude hand of a ſtranger, without exciting a viſible emotion. "I ſee the ſubject is too much for you," cried he, "it is too fraught with horror, to be ſurveyed with indifference. Nature ſickens at the recollection, but you need ſay no more; depend upon it, I ſhall make a proper repreſentation of your caſe. Through me, your wrongs ſhall find a tongue. I will proclaim to the world, all that I have heard you utter. That maſs of horrors, that ſyſtem of iniquity, which your highneſs would deſcribe, ſhall be laid open to the eye of day, and its wicked, nefarious, abominable, and deteſted author, expoſed to the juſt indignation of the congregated univerſe!"—At theſe words, again bowing to the ground, he turned round, and departed. As I had no doubt of the unhappy man's inſanity, I exceedingly rejoiced at his departure, and that he had done no miſchief to himſelf or others, during this paroxyſm of delirium.

Among the crowd, which the vociferation of this unhappy maniac had attracted round us, I perceived one of the gentlemen I had met at Miſs Ardent's; and

was happy to take the opportunity of renewing our acquaintance. From him I learned, that the notice of the noisy orator, had been drawn upon me, by a paragraph inserted in a newspaper, of that morning, which, after mentioning my name, and describing my person, safely and wickedly insinuated, "that I had come there on behalf of the Hindoo inhabitants of Bengal, to complain of the horrid cruelties, and unexampled oppression, under which, through the mal-administration of the British governor of India, we were made to groan."

I was exceedingly shocked at the idea of the consequences, that might arise to the chosen servant of the minister, the writer of the newspaper, from having suffered himself to be thus imposed upon. I did not know what punishment might await the confidential conductor of this vehicle of intelligence, should his master discover that he had suffered a falsehood to pollute that pure fountain of public instruction, in which his care for the morals, the virtue, the fortune, the health, and the beauty of all the subjects of this extensive Empire, is so fully evinced. The gentleman observing my anxiety, told me, that the best method of proceeding, was, to authorise the publisher to contradict the

paragraph alluded to in the next paper. And that he would, if I choſe it, go then with me to his houſe.

Eager to extricate the poor man from the dilemma into which his ignorance had thrown him, I gladly accepted the friendly offer, and we proceeded immediately to the office of this prime miniſter of fame, who received us with all the ſtatelineſs which an idea of the conſequence of ſituation never fails to inſpire. The gentleman took upon himſelf to open the buſineſs; which he did, by ſaying, "that he had brought with him a ſtranger, of high rank, who conſidered himſelf aggrieved by a paragraph, which had been that morning inſerted in his paper; and then pointing it out, he told him, that I would expect to ſee a contradiction of that part of it, which related to the Britiſh governor of India, for whom I entertained ſentiments of the moſt profound reſpect." The conductor ſhrugged up his ſhoulders, and ſaid, "the paragraph had been paid for."—"That is to ſay, the contradiction of it muſt be paid for likewiſe," returned the gentleman. "I dare ſay, the Rajah will have no objection." Obſerving the aſtoniſhment that was painted in my countenance, he told me, that nothing was more commonly practiſed. "Yes"; added the

news writer, " the gentleman muſt certainly allow, that when a falſehood has been paid for, it is not reaſonable to expect, that it can be contradicted for nothing!—It would be quite *diſhoncurable!*" " What!" cried I, with an emotion no longer to be ſuppreſſed, " and is it then in the power of a piece of gold, to procure circulation to whatever untruths the baſe malignity of envy or of hatred may chooſe to dictate? are theſe the articles of intelligence, diffuſed at ſuch vaſt expence, over this Chriſtian kingdom? Ah! ye ſimple people! whom diſtance has happily preſerved in ignorance of the ways of news writers, how little do ye know the real value of what ye ſo liberally pay for!"

So much was I diſguſted, that if my own character alone had been concerned, I would rather have ſubmitted to the evil, than to the remedy.—As it was, I threw down the guinea and departed, with rather leſs reverence for the authenticity of newſpaper intelligence, than I had entertained at my entrance.

The diſagreeable conſequences of this affair, have not ſtopped here; I can no longer ſtir abroad, without attracting the gaze of obſervation.—Places of public entertainment are filled by the bare ex-

peclation of beholding me; all thoſe of reſort, in the out-ſkirts of the town, have advertiſed me, as part of their bill of fare; and I am this evening diſappointed of the pleaſure I expected, at a new ſpecies of amuſement, called a Maſquerade, from ſeeing in the newſpaper, that my intention is known to the public. In fine, I can no longer find happineſs in this metropolis, and would with pleaſure at this moment re-embark on the boſom of that ocean, whoſe diſtant waves now beat againſt the happy ſhores of India. Some weeks muſt elapſe, before ſuch an opportunity can be found. I ſhall, therefore, in the interim, avail myſelf of the polite and friendly invitation of Lady Grey, and the family of the Ardents, to go into the country.

If I can prevail upon the philoſopher to accompany me, I ſhall indeed be happy. And let not Maandaara, too much exult over the diſappointment of his friend, when I confeſs to him, that experience has now convinced me, that, though the novelty of manners and opinions may produce amuſement, and the variety of human characters afford ſome degree of inſtruction, it is the Society of the friend we eſteem, that can alone ſolace and ſatisfy the heart!

When I vainly flattered myſelf, with obtaining the company of Severan, I had entirely forgot his experiments. He has now engaged in them with renewed ardour; and ſo deeply is he intereſted in their ſucceſs, that no motive, leſs powerful than the poſſibility of relieving a fellow creature in diſtreſs, would be ſufficient to make him quit his laboratory. The morning after that in which we had viſited the building allotted to the reception of the unfortunate people, whom theſe good Chriſtians have ſo piouſly devoted to Eemen*, I paid a viſit to the worthy family who had been reſcued from the puniſhment of poverty, and after having done what was in my power to preſerve them from being found guilty of a like crime in future, directed them to return to Severan, the ſum he had ſo generouſly advanced.

But though I am thus deprived of his company for the preſent, he promiſes to join me, as ſoon as his ſcientific engagements will admit. And in the mean time, he tells me, I may expect amuſement (I wonder he did not rather ſay inſtruction) from the characters I ſhall meet at Sir Caprice Ardent's. This man of many minds, has left his temples

* The Prince of Hell.

and his turrets, his pillars and pillaſters, his arcades and his colonades, to be finiſhed by the next lover of architecture, who may chance to ſpring up in the family; and has retired into the country, to enjoy, without interruption, the calm pleaſures of philoſophy. The philoſophy which at preſent engroſſes the ſoul of the Baronet, is, however, of a different ſpecies from that which engages the capacious mind of Doctor Severan. It is a philoſophy which diſdains the ſlow proceſs of experiment, and chiefly glories in contradicting common ſenſe. Its main object is, to ſhew that the *things which are, are not*, and the *things which are not, are*: and this is called Metaphyſics.

As I underſtand the matter, the art of theſe metaphyſical champions lies in puzzling each other, and the beſt puzzler carries off the prize.

While theſe Chriſtian-born philoſophers pique themſelves in turning from light, to walk in the darkneſs of their own vain imaginations, may the words that are written in the "Ocean of Wiſdom," never eſcape from our remembrance!

"Though one ſhould be intimately "acquainted with the whole circle of Sci-"ences, and maſter of the principles, on

" which the moſt abſtruſe of them are
" founded; yet, if this knowledge be un-
" accompanied by the humble worſhip of
" the Omniſcient God, it ſhall prove al-
" together vain, and unprofitable *."

I have heard of a conveyance, which, although not eligible for my perſonal accommodation, yet will ſerve to tranſmit this letter to my friend.

May he who poſſeſſes the eight attributes, receive your prayers! May you walk in the ſhadow of Veeſhnu! and when by the favour of Varuna, this letter ſhall reach the dwelling of Maandaara, may he read its contents with the ſame ſentiments of friendſhip, as now beats in the boſom of Zaarmilla. The brother of Zamarcanda ſalutes the ſiſter of his heart, and weeps over the tender bloſſom he entruſted to her boſom. O that by her care, his mind may be nouriſhed by the refreſhing dew of early virtue! What can I ſay more?

* This paſſage appears to have been taken from the Tervo-Vaulever Kuddel, a compoſition which bears the marks of conſiderable antiquity, and which, though written not by a Bramin, but a Hindoo of the loweſt order, is held in high eſtimation, for the beauties of its poetry, and intrinſic value of its precepts. Part of it has been lately tranſlated into Engliſh, by Mr. Kinderſley.

LETTER XV.

PRAISE to Ganeſa*! How would the God, whoſe ſymbol is an Elephant's Head, have been aſtoniſhed, could he have defended to have been a ſpectator of the ſcene I have juſt now witneſſed? Had he beheld, in what a ridiculous light he is repreſented by the Philoſophers of Europe, who pretend to be his worſhippers, I am afraid, he would have been more than half aſhamed of his votaries. But let me not anticipate. You muſt travel the whole journey: and, according to my plan of punctual and minute information, you muſt be told, that I left London the morning after that in which my laſt epiſtle was concluded. And travelling, after the manner of the country, in a carriage drawn by four horſes, which were changed every ſix or eight coſs, at Choultries, replete with every convenience, and occupied by the politeſt, and civileſt, and the moſt hoſpitable people, I have, ſince my reſidence in Europe, ever encountered.

* The God of Wiſdom, whoſe ſymbol is the Head of an Elephant.

Wherever I ſtopped, ſmiles of welcome ſat on every brow, nor was the benign ſauvity of their manners, confined to myſelf alone; it extended even to my domeſtics; and was particularly evinced in the cordial looks, and kindly greetings beſtowed on my Engliſh Sircar, who has the uncontrouled diſburſement of my money.

I had already travelled upwards of two hundred miles (about one hundred of our coſs) without meeting with any adventure without notice; and had turned a few miles out of the great road, into that which leads to the Baronet's, when on ſtopping to change horſes, at the Inn of a paltry village, I met with an unexpected delay. They had no horſes at home. I was, therefore, under the neceſſity of waiting for the return of a pair, which the landlord aſſured me, would be back in leſs than half an hour, and ſhould then proceed with me immediately. I was a little ſurpriſed, to hear him propoſe having my carriage drawn by *one* pair, as my Engliſh ſervant had aſſured me, it was a thing *impoſſible*. And his judgment had been confirmed, not only by the London horſe-hirer, but by the Maſter of every Inn upon the road. But as the road was now more broken, and more hilly, than I had hitherto travelled, I found that

two horſes would be ſufficient. And for theſe two, I reſolved to wait with all poſſible patience.—I do not know that I have hitherto mentioned to you, that in this country, there are various ways of meaſuring time: and that, what is with trades-people, inn-keepers, ſervants, &c. called five minutes, is ſeldom leſs than one hour, by the ſun-dial. What they call an hour, is a very undeterminate period indeed; being ſometimes two hours, and as I have frequently known it, with my Engliſh ſervant, ſometimes the length of a whole evening. Making up my mind, therefore, to ſpend two or three hours, at this ſorry village, I was not a little pleaſed, to hear, that I had the proſpect of ſome company; and that two gentlemen from Sir Caprice Ardent's, were in the ſame houſe. They ſoon introduced themſelves to my acquaintance; and it was not long before I diſcovered, that theſe were two of the Philoſophers, mentioned to me by my friend Severan.

They informed me, that they had been brought to the village on a diſagreeable errand. They had, it ſeems, been ſtopped and robbed in their way from London to Ardent-Hall. The robber was now in cuſtody, but their evidence was neceſſary for his commitment to priſon. On this account, they were deſired to appear

before a Magiſtrate; and as I rejoice in every new ſcene, from which I can hope to acquire a new idea, I gladly accompanied them thither. Little did I know, what acquiſitions were to be made to my ſtock of knowledge! or, that in the ſimple buſineſs of recognizing the perſon of a robber, I was to be made acquainted with a complete ſyſtem of Philoſophy. Alas! ignorant that I was! I knew not that to involve the ſimpleſt queſtion in perplexity, and to veil the plain dictates of common ſenſe, in the thick miſt of obſcurity and doubt, is an eaſy matter with metaphyſical Philoſophers!

We were ſhewn into the Hall of Juſtice, and found the Magiſtrate ſeated in his chair. This portly perſonage, who in figure very much reſembled thoſe images of the Mandarines of China, which are often to be ſeen both in Aſia and Europe, with due ſolemnity of voice, addreſſing himſelf to the eldeſt of the two gentlemen, deſired him to examine the features of the culprit, who now ſtood before him, and ſay, whether he was ſatisfied as to his *identity*. "Much may be ſaid upon the ſubject of *identity*," replied Mr. Puzzledorf; "the greateſt philoſophers have differed in their opinions concerning it, and ill would it become me, to decide

upon a queſtion of ſuch vaſt importance." " You have but to look in the man's face, Sir," returned the Magiſtrate, " to ſee whether he is the identical perſon, by whom you have been robbed; and I do not ſee, what any philoſopher has to ſay concerning it." It would ill become me to inſtruct your worſhip upon this point," reſumed Mr. Puzzledorf, " but his being *identically* the ſame, is in *my opinion*, altogether impoſſible. Nor is my opinion ſingular; happily, it is ſupported by the moſt reſpectable authorities. Locke, indeed, makes identity to conſiſt in conſciouſneſs, but conſciouſneſs exiſts in ſucceſſion, it cannot be the ſame in any two moments. His Hypotheſis, therefore, is not tenable; in fact, Watts, Collins, Clarke, Butler, Berkely, Price, Prieſtley, all have, in ſome degree differed from it." " Pray Sir, were theſe gentlemen Juſtices of the King's Bench?" interrupted the Magiſtrate; " if they were not, I muſt take the liberty of telling you, Sir, they were very impertinent to interfere in ſuch queſtions! I am not to be taught the buſineſs of a Juſtice of Peace, by any of them.— And again aſk you, whether, that man, who calls himſelf Tobias, alias Timothy Trundle, be the very identical, perſon, by whom you were robbed on the

18th inſtant, on his Majeſty's highway?" "I muſt again repeat it," returned the Philoſopher, "the thing is impoſſible; it is proved beyond a doubt, that there is no ſuch quality as permanent identity, appertaining to any thing whatever:—and that no one can any more remain one and the ſame perſon for two moments together, than that two ſucceſſive moments can be one, and the ſame moment. And if you will give me the honour of ſtating my arguments upon the ſubject, which I ſhall do in a manner truly philoſophical, I make no doubt of convincing you, of the truth of my ſyſtem. It is, indeed, a ſyſtem ſo clear, ſo plain, ſo unanſwerable, that nothing but the moſt wilful blindneſs and obſtinacy, can reſiſt its truth. "That I deny," ſaid Mr. Axiom, interrupting his friend. "I agree with you, that conſciouſneſs, being frequently interrupted, is not ſtrictly continuous, and, therefore, the continuity of conſciouſneſs cannot conſtitute identity: I alſo allow, that wherever there is a chemical combination, there is a correſponding change of properties, and that the majority of the particles of which the man is compoſed, are neceſſarily in ſucceſſion changed.—But, I aſſert, and will undertake to prove, that there exiſts certain ſtamina which

are never carried off. Where this ſtamina is ſituated, will, I know, admit of diſpute. In the heart, ſay ſome; in the brain, ſay others: for my part, I think it is moſt probable, that it is placed in that part of the brain which approaches the neareſt poſſible to the very top of the noſe, which ſituation, is, undoubtedly, the moſt convenient for receiving the notices ſent to it from the organs of ſight, hearing, ſmelling, &c. and which may be more inconteſtibly proved, from the following arguments: firſt"——" Fire, and fury!" exclaimed the magiſtrate, " this is more than human patience can bear! But do not think, gentlemen, that I am to be made a fool of in this way; I ſhall let you know that it is no ſuch eaſy matter to make a fool of me! And was it not for the ſake of my worthy friend, Sir Caprice Ardent, I ſhould let you know the conſequences of inſulting one of his Majeſty's juſtices of the peace, in the exerciſe of his duty. A vile miſdemeanour! a high breach of decorum! and not to be ſuffered to paſs with impunity. Once for all, I deſire you, Sir (to Axiom) to examine the countenance of the culprit, and, without loſs of time, to declare—whether he be actually the perſon guilty of the *alledged crime?*"

" As for crime," replied Mr. Axiom, " I abſolutely deny the exiſtence of crime in any caſe whatever. What is by the vulgar erroneouſly called ſo, is, in the enlightened eye of philoſophy, nothing more than an error in judgment. And, indeed, according to my friend Doctor Sceptic (Tim Trundle's former maſter) we have no right to predicate this much. —For what is right? what is wrong? what is vice? what is virtue? but terms merely relative, and which are to be applied by the ſtandard of a man's own reaſon. If, for inſtance, the reaſon of Mr. Timothy Trundle, leads him to revolt at the unjuſt diſtribution of property, and to think it virtue, to give his feeble aid towards redreſſing that enormous abuſe, who ſhall dare to call it wrong?" " I can tell you, Sir," cried the Juſtice, " that the law—will think it *right*, that Mr. Timothy Trundle, ſhould be hanged for ſo doing.—Nor, would it be any loſs to the world, if all the promulgators of ſuch doctrines, the aiders and abettors of ſuch acts of atrocity, ſhared the ſame fate!" " That Sir," returned Axiom, with great calmneſs, " I conceive to be an error of judgment, on the part of your worſhip."—" You, however, declare, that this is the perſon by whom you were robbed?" ſaid the Juſtice. " Yes," re-

plied Axiom, " I have no ſcruples on the ſubject of his perſonal identity; identity being, as I ſaid before"—" O ſay no more upon the ſubject, but let the clerk read your affidavit and have done with it," cried the magiſtrate. The clerk proceeded, and the ſolemn appeal to the Deity—an appeal which ſo nearly concerned the life of a fellow-creature, was made—by the extraordinary, and, to me, incomprehenſible ceremony of kiſſing a little dirty-looking book!

The priſoner, who had hitherto maintained a ſtrict ſilence, now addreſſed himſelf to Mr. Axiom, to whom, it ſeems, he was well known, having long been ſervant to his particular friend. He began in a ſullen tone, as follows:

" I did not think as how it would have been your honour, that would have had the heart to turn ſo againſt me at laſt. Many a time and oft, have I heard you, and my maſter, Doctor Sceptic, ſay, that all mankind were equal, and that the poor had as good a right to property as the rich. You ſaid, moreover, that they were all fools, that would not make the moſt they could of this world, ſeeing as how there was no other; for that religion was all a hum, and the Parſon a rogue, who did not himſelf believe a word of it.—Nay, the very laſt day that

ever I attended you at dinner, did not you ſay, again and again, that Kings, Princes, and Prime Miniſters, were all worſe than pick-pockets? And yet now you would go for to hang me, for having only civilly aſked a few guineas, to make up a little matter of loſs, I had had in the Lottery. I wonder you a'nt aſhamed to turn ſo againſt your own words." "No, Timothy," returned the philoſopher; "my opinions are not ſo eaſily changed. No man, ever yet convinced me of being in an error. You have only to regret your having lived in a dark age, when vulgar prejudices ſo far prevail, as to conſider laws as neceſſary to the well-being of ſociety.—But be comforted, Timothy! The age of reaſon approaches. That glorious æra is faſt advancing, in which every man ſhall do that which is right in his own eyes, and the fear of the gallows ſhall have as little influence, as the fear of hell."

"Ah! that I had kept to my good grandmother's wholeſome doctrine of hell and damnation!" (exclaimed the poor wretch, whom the Juſtice's men were now dragging back to priſon)—"I ſhould not now be at the mercy of a falſe friend, who laughed me out of the fear of God—and now leaves me to the mercy of the

gallows!"—He continued to ſpeak, but we could no longer hear. He was dragged to his priſon, and we having made our obedience to the Magiſtrate, departed. I have been enabled thus circumſtantially, to detail the particulars of this curious converſation, from the politeneſs of the Magiſtrate's nephew, who was ſo kind as to furniſh me with a copy of his notes, taken down in, what is called, Short Hand.

It is poſſible, that much of it may appear to you unintelligible; but be not diſcouraged. How ſhould our unenlightened minds, expect to underſtand the language of philoſophers, ſince from all I can learn, they ſeldom thoroughly underſtand themſelves?

On returning to the Inn, I found the horſes in waiting, the gentlemens' were alſo in readineſs, and we proceeded in company to Ardent Hall. My reception from the Baronet, was very cordial. That of his Lady, was moſt frigidly polite. Her daughter, did not ſeem to remember ever having ſeen me before; but the elder Miſs Ardent, ſhook me by the hand, with a degree of frankneſs, as maſculine as her underſtanding.

The converſation of the evening, turned upon the ſame topics, that had been diſcuſſed before the Magiſtrate, Mr. Axiom

and Mr. Puzzledorf doing little more than ſupport the opinions they had formerly advanced. Sir Caprice Ardent, ſeemed, in general, diſpoſed to agree with the laſt ſpeaker; and Doctor Sceptic, who made one of the party, made a point of agreeing with none.—Miſs Ardent retired to write letters, and her Ladyſhip and her daughter, remained as ſilent as did the friend of Maandaara.

O Sheermaal!—Wiſe and learned Bramin!—May thy meek and generous ſpirit, pardon the preſumption of my ignorance, which refuſing to confide in thy experience, periſhed in cheriſhing the ill-founded notion, that all the people of England were Chriſtians!—With all humility, I now retract my error: and confeſs—that of the many religions prevalent in this ſtrange country, Chriſtianity (as it is ſet forth in the Shaſter) has the ſmalleſt number of votaries: and, according to the accounts of my new friend, is faſt journeying to oblivion.

Much do the Philoſophers exult, in expoſing the weakneſs and wickedneſs of its authors. Theſe artful and deſigning men, who having entered into a combination to lead the moſt virtuous lives, having bound themſelves to the practice of fortitude and forbearance, meekneſs

and magnanimity, piety towards God, and benevolence to all mankind, weakly and foolishly, refused to take to themselves any merit for their conduct; and renouncing all worldly honours and interests, resigned themselves to persecution, pains, tortures, and death, in support of the truth of their doctrines.

All this appears very foolish in the eyes of the Philosophers; who, judging of others by themselves, pronounce so much self-denial, fortitude, and forbearance, to be utterly impossible. The God of the Christians, appears in their eyes, as very reasonable, in exacting purity of heart—and humility from his votaries. They therefore, think it is doing much service to mankind, to free them from these uneasy restraints, and to lead them to the worship of Dewtah, that are not quite so unreasonable.

To make the attempt, is all that is necessary, towards obtaining the appellation of Philosopher.

On examining the Cosha*, I found, indeed, that the word Philosopher, was said to signify, "a man deep in knowledge, either moral or natural"—but from my own experience, I can pronounce the definition to be nugatory: and that those

* Dictionary.

who uſually call themſelves ſuch, are men, who, without much knowledge, either moral or natural, entertain a high idea of their own ſuperiority, from having the temerity to reject whatever has the ſanction of experience, and common ſenſe.

The poojah of Philoſophers is performed to certain Idols, called Syſtems. The faith of each ſyſtem has been promulgated by the prieſt, who either firſt formed the Idol, or firſt ſet it up to receive the poojah of the credulous. This faith, is received by the votary of the ſyſtem with undoubting confidence, and defended with the fervency of pious zeal. It muſt be confeſſed, that this zeal, ſometimes carries the Philoſophers to a pitch of intolerance, that is repugnant to the feelings of a Hindoo. Never did the moſt bigoted derveiſh * of the Muſſulmans, betray more abhorrence at the ſight of the Idols of the Pagoda, than is evinced by the worſhipper of ſyſtem towards a Chriſtian prieſt! And yet, ſo far are the latter from returning any portion of this diſlike, that the majority of them

* The antipathy of the Muſſulmans to every ſpecies of Idolatry, is ſtill the occaſion of frequent diſturbance to the Hindoos, in the performance of the ſuperſtitious ceremonies of their religion.

are very careful not to offend the Philoſophers, by too rigid an adherence to the precepts of *that* Shaſter, to which they know their adverſaries have ſuch an inſuperable antipathy.

All the Philoſophers now at Ardent-Hall, perform poojah to different ſyſtems: and ſeem to have no opinion in common, except the expectation of the return of the Suttee Jogue, which they diſtinguiſhed by the name of *The Age of Reaſon.*

In this bleſſed æra of purity and perfection, it is believed by each of the Philoſophers, that the worſhip of his Idol ſhall be eſtabliſhed; and the doctrines of his prieſt, be the faith of the world.

" Then," ſays Mr. Puzzledorf, " will be evinced the dignity of man." for this is the Idol to which Mr. Puzzledorf, profeſſes the performance of poojah. You are, perhaps, curious to know in what this dignity conſiſts? Know, then, that it appears, from the reſearches of the prieſt of Mr. Puzzledorf—that ſome difference in point of organization, doth actually exiſt between him and a Bamboo, or a Bramble-buſh: no brain having as yet been diſcovered in any of the vegetable tribes. Should ſuch a diſcovery crown the labours of ſome future Philoſopher, what a ſad ſtroke will it be to the dig-

nity of Man! He will then be reduced to a level, not only with the beaſts of the field, but with the very trees of the foreſt! The ſimilarity is already too conſpicuous. Like them, he is doomed ſlowly to advance to maturity; ſhortly to flouriſh, and quickly to decay. Like them too, according to the faith of Mr. Puzzledorf, he is doomed to moulder into duſt, from which, there is no hopes of reſuſcitation, no proſpect of revival!—Such in the eyes of the adherents of this ſyſtem, is the vaunted dignity of Man!

The Idol of Mr. Axiom, is the little ſtamina at the top of the noſe. This, he declares to be imperiſhable, and that it muſt of neceſſity exiſt to all eternity.—To the faith of Mr. Axiom, Mr. Puzzledorf oppoſes an argument, that is frequently made uſe of by the biggoted of all ſects, againſt the opinions of their adverſaries:—viz. That it is *nonſenſe*. He ſays, moreover, that in the age of reaſon, it will inconteſtibly appear, that every particle is alike liable to the decompoſition which thoſe poor bodies of our's muſt undergo in the laboratory of death, who is too good a chemiſt to ſuffer a little favourite Stamina of Mr. Axiom, to eſcape him. Both Philoſophers appeal for the truth of their ſyſtems, to the experiments of Doctor Severan.

Alas! little does the good Doctor think, that the exiſtence of a future ſtate, depends upon the management of his crucible!

I have not been able to diſcover the name of the Syſtem, to which Doctor Soeptic pays his vows, the only thing I have ever heard him attempt to prove, is, that nothing ever was, will, or can be proved. All religions being, in his opinion, equally falſe, ridiculous, and abſurd. But, though he performs not poojah to the Idols of any of his brother Philoſophers, it is the religion of Chriſtianity, againſt which, the arrows of his ſarcaſm are chiefly pointed. When an opportunity occurs of venting the overflowings of his zeal, in a ſneer at any of the opinions or practices of the Chriſtians, his rigid features relax into a ſmile of triumph, which, for a moment, diſpels from his countenance the gloom of diſcontent. It ſeems to have been the endeavour of his life, to eradicate from his boſom, thoſe ſocial feelings and affections, which form ſo great a part of the felicity of common mortals.—A ſtranger to the animating glow of friendſhip, and the tender confidence of eſteem; he conſiders all attachments, as a proof of weakneſs—into which, if he has ever in any degree relaxed—it is in favour of

a nephew, a hopeful youth, whom he piques himself upon having freed from the prejudices he had contracted from a pious father, at whose piety, and whose prejudices, the young man now laughs in a very becoming manner!

The Idol to whose service this young man hath devoted himself, is called Atheism. From all that I have been able to learn, Atheism is an infernal deity, who demands of his votaries, such cruel sacrifices—that every one initiated into the mysteries of this faith, must make a solemn and absolute renunciation of the use of his senses—shut his eyes upon the fair volume of Nature—and deny to his heart, the pleasurable emotions of admiration and gratitude!

Such are the sacrifices required by this Idol, even from its speculative votaries. The zeal of its practical proselytes, carries them still farther.—I am told, that the female converts seldom fail to make an offering to Atheism, of their peace, purity, and good fame; and that of its worshippers, among the lower orders of men, numbers every year suffer martyrdom, at a place called Newgate; which I suppose to be a temple dedicated to this superstition.

What are the posthumous honours, which the martyrs of Atheism, receive

rom their brethren, the philoſophers, I have not been able to diſcover, as it is a ſubject on which the philoſophers modeſtly decline to expatiate.

From the converſations that I have overheard, between the nephew of Doctor Sceptic, and Mr. Vapour, who is one of the moſt renowned teachers of this faith, I find, that its adherents perform poojah to certain inferior Dewtah, called Exiſting, or External, circumſtances, energies, and powers, of whom, I am not yet ſufficiently prepared to ſpeak.

Mr. Vapour is particularly tenacious of his faith, which is, indeed, of a very extraordinary nature. Rejecting all the received opinions that have hitherto prevailed in the world, and utterly diſcrediting the circumſtances upon which they have been founded; he reſerves his whole ſtock of credulity for futurity. Here his faith is ſo ſtrong, as to bound over the barriers of probability, to unite all that is diſcordant in nature, and to believe in things impoſſible.

The age of reaſon, is thought, by Mr. Vapour, to be very near at hand. Nothing, he ſays, is ſo eaſy, as to bring it about immediately. It is only to perſuade the people in power to reſign its exerciſe; the rich to part with their property; and with one conſent, to aboliſh all laws,

and put an end to all government: "Then," ſays this credulous philoſopher, "ſhall we ſee the perfection of virtue! Not ſuch virtue, it is true, as has heretofore paſſed current in the world. Benevolence will not then be heard of; gratitude, will be conſidered as a crime, and puniſhed with the contempt it ſo juſtly deſerves. Filial affection would, no doubt, be treated as a crime of a ſtill deeper dye, but that, to prevent the poſſibility of ſuch a breach of virtue, no man, in the age of reaſon, ſhall be able to gueſs who his father is; nor any woman to ſay to her huſband, behold your ſon. Chaſtity, ſhall then be conſidered as a weakneſs, and the virtue of a female eſtimated according as ſhe has had ſufficient energy to break its mean reſtraints. "To what ſublime heights," exclaims this ſapient philoſopher, "may we not expect that virtue will then be ſeen to ſoar!—By deſtroying the domeſtic affections, what an addition will be made to human happineſs! And when man is no longer corrupted by the tender and endearing ties of brother, ſiſter, wife, and child, how greatly will his diſpoſitions be meliorated! The fear of puniſhment too, that ignoble bondage, which, at preſent, reſtrains the energies of ſo many great men, will no longer damp the noble ardour of the daring robber,

or the midnight thief. Nor will any man then be degraded by working for another. The divine energies of the ſoul will not then be ſtifled by labouring for ſupport. What is neceſſary, every individual may, without difficulty, do for himſelf. Every man ſhall then till his own field, and cultivate his own garden."—"And pray how are the Ladies to be clothed in the age of reaſon?" aſked Miſs Ardent.—"Any Lady," replied the philoſopher, "who chooſes to wear clothes, which, in this cold climate, may by ſome be conſidered as a matter of neceſſity, muſt herſelf pluck the wool from the back of the ſheep, and ſpin it on a diſtaff, of her own making." "But, ſhe cannot weave it," rejoined Miſs Ardent, "without a loom; a loom cannot well be made without iron tools, and iron tools can have no exiſtence without the aggregated labours of many individuals." "True," returned Mr. Vapour: and it is therefore probable, that in the glorious æra I ſpeak of, men will again have recourſe to the ſkins of beaſts for covering; and theſe will be procured according to the ſtrength and capacity of the individual. A ſummer's dreſs, may be made of the ſkins of mice, and ſuch animals; while thoſe of ſheep, hares, horſes, dogs, &c. may be worn in win-

ter. Such things may, for a time, take place. But as the human mind advances to that perfection, at which, when deprived of religion, laws, and government, it is deſtined to arrive, men will, no doubt, poſſeſs ſufficient *energy*, to reſiſt the effects of cold; and to exiſt, not only without clothing, but without food alſo. When reaſon is thus far advanced, an effort of the mind will be ſufficient to prevent the approach of diſeaſe, and ſtop the progreſs of decay. People will not then be ſo fooliſh as to die." "I can believe, that in the age of reaſon, women won't be troubled with the vapours," replied Miſs Ardent, "but, that they ſhould be able to live without food and clothing is another affair." "Women!" repeated Mr. Vapour, with a contemptuous ſmile; "we ſhall not then be troubled with—women. In the age of reaſon, the world ſhall contain only a race of men!!"

Nothing could be more repugnant to the opinions of Miſs Ardent, than this aſſertion—This worthy daughter of Sereſwati is firmly perſuaded, that, in the age of reaſon, a very different doctrine will be eſtabliſhed. It is her opinion, that the perfection of the female underſtanding will then be univerſally acknowledged.

She pants for that bleſſed period, when the eyes of men ſhall no longer be attracted by the charms of youth and beauty; when mind, and mind alone, ſhall be thought worthy the attention of a philoſopher.

In that wiſhed-for æra, the talents of women, ſhe ſays, ſhall not be debaſed by houſehold drudgery, or their noble ſpirits broken by baſe ſubmiſſion, to uſurped authority. The reins will then be put into the hands of wiſdom; and as women will, in the age of reaſon, probably be found to have the largeſt ſhare, it is they who will then drive the chariot of ſtate, and guide the ſteeds of war!

Mr. Axiom, whoſe deference to the opinions of Miſs Ardent is implicit and unvariable, perfectly coincides in her opinion.——"Who," ſaid he, the other evening, in diſcourſing upon this ſubject; "who would look for mind, in the inſipid features of a girl? It is when the countenance has acquired a character, which it never can do under the period of forty, that it becomes an object of admiration, to a man of ſenſe. Ah! how different is the ſentiment which it then inſpires!" The tender ſigh, which was heaved by Mr. Axiom, at the concluſion of this ſentence, in vibrating on the ears of Miſs Ardent, ſeemed to touch ſome

pleaſant uniſon, that overſpread her countenance with a ſmile. You, my friend, will, I doubt not, ſmile alſo, at hearing of theſe glad tidings for grandmothers; and divert yourſelf with thinking, when this empire of reaſon ſhall be extended to the regions of the Eaſt, what curious revolutions it will make in the Zenanas of Hindooſtan!—May the Gods of our fathers preſerve thee, from the ſpirits of the deep—and the ſyſtems of philoſophers!

What can I ſay more?

LETTER XVI.

MAY He, who at all times claims preference in adoration, preſerve thee!!

The day after that in which I laſt took up the reed of inſtruction, ſome ſtrangers arrived at Ardent Hall, who had come into the country, on purpoſe to ſee a celebrated water-fall,—on whoſe beauties, they poured out ſuch encomiums, as kindled the flame of curioſity in my boſom.

I no ſooner expreſſed my deſire of viſiting this ſcene of wonders, than Sir Caprice, with great politeneſs, ordered the chief officer of his houſehold to attend me thither.—It was natural to expect, that ſome of the philoſophers might

have felt an inclination to view a ſcene, to the deſcription of which, it appeared, they were no ſtrangers.—But, alas! to the worſhipper of ſyſtems, the fair face of Nature has no charms!—In vain, for him, does the appearance of Arjoon tinge the cheeks of the * cup-bearers of the ſky, with the crimſon bluſh of gladneſs! In vain, for him, do the robes of the ſeaſons, wove in the changeful looms of Nature, preſent the ceaſeleſs charm of variety! In vain, for him, ſmiles the ſoft beauties of the blooming valley, when the linnet, ſitting on his roſe-buſh, ſings forth the praiſes of the ſpring! And equally in vain, for him, doth Nature expoſe to view the terrors of her wonder-working arm, in the ſcenes of ſublimity and grandeur! Midſt all the beauties of creation, a philoſopher ſees nothing beautiful, but the ſyſtem which he worſhips!

Happily for me, Mr. Trueman, the ſteward of Sir Caprice, was a ſtranger to ſyſtems; but had cultivated ſo much taſte for the beauties of rural landſcape, as enabled him to point out to my obſervation, a thouſand charms, which might otherwiſe have eſcaped my notice. Nor was this the only benefit I derived from his ſociety. From his plain

* An appellation for the Clouds, which frequently occurs in Aſiatic Poetry.

good ſenſe, I received more real and uſeful information; in our ride of four hours, than I had gained in nearly as many weeks, in the company of the philoſophers.

For the diſtance of many miles round Ardent-Hall, the country is irregular and undulating. It abounds in trees, which, though they boaſt not the height of the Mango, or the vaſt circumference of the Banyan, are neither deſtitute of grandeur, nor of beauty. Theſe are not clumped together in ſolemn groves, or gloomy jungles; but are ſo planted, as to ſurround the ſmall fields into which the country is divided; each of which ſmall encloſures, now fraught with the riches of the yellow harveſt, appears like a "Topaz in a ſetting of Emeralds." The chearful aſpect of the peaſants, buſily employed in cutting down the grain, while their fancies ſeemed to revel in the ſcene of plenty, excited the moſt pleaſurable emotions in my heart; for who but a philoſopher, can "breathe the air of hilarity, and not partake of the intoxication of delight *?"

The ſcene, however, ſoon changed: an extenſive plain opened before us, where no

* In ſeveral paſſages of this Letter, the Rajah ſeems to have adopted the imagery of the Perſian Poet Inatulla, of Delhi——with whoſe writings, he was, doubtleſs, well acquainted.

yellow harveſt waved its golden head—where no tall trees afforded ſhelter to the traveller—all was waſte and barren. Upon inquiring of my intelligent companion, the reaſon of this wonderful change, he could only inform me, that this was called *a Common*, and that it could not be cultivated, without a ſolemn act of the Legiſlature. I now perceived, that it was from reaſons of ſtate, that theſe great portions of land (for Commons occur very frequently in England) were ſuffered to remain deſolate; but in vain did I endeavour to diſcover the motives, which could induce the government to lay this reſtraint on cultivation.

As geeſe appeared to have here an excluſive right of paſturage, I was inclined to think, that they might, perhaps, be the objects of ſuperſtitious veneration to the Engliſh court; but on applying to my guide, I found, that geeſe were not of the number of protected animals; and that far from being honoured in the manner of thoſe which are called *Game*, the murder of a gooſe might be performed without ceremony, by the moſt ignoble hands. Perhaps, thought I, it is from the benevolent regard of the miniſter towards the old women who keep theſe

noiſy flocks; but, alas! a little reflection convinced me, that the age of reaſon, is not yet ſufficiently eſtabliſhed, to countenance the ſuppoſition. It muſt, then, be from the pious apprehenſion of endangering the virtue of the people, by an overflow of plenty.—If this be really the caſe—it muſt be confeſſed, that a more effectual method could not be taken to bring about the deſired end.

Having paſſed the commons, we entered into a deep and narrow valley, overhung with frowning rocks; theſe ſeemed frequently to cloſe upon us, and ſternly to deny all acceſs to the interior ſcene. A ſilver ſtream, which alternately kiſſed the feet of the precipices on each ſide, encouraged us to proceed, and gently conducted us to the furthermoſt end of the valley. It was here, that the glories of the cataract burſt upon our ſenſes.—But how ſhall my feeble pen, do juſtice to ſuch a ſcene? Can I, by deſcription, ſtun the ears of Maandaara, with the thunder of the falling waters; or, preſent to his imagination, the groteſque figures of the rocks, ſurrounding the magnificent baſon into which they fell? Can I bring terror to his boſom, by the mention of the over-jutting crags, which, on one ſide, topped the precipice;

or produce in his mind, the ſenſation of delight, by a minute deſcription of the various trees and ſhrubs, whoſe thick foliage ornamented the oppoſite bank?—Ah no! The taſk is impoſſible; or poſſible only to the magic pen of poetry. By Zaarmilla, it muſt be paſſed over in ſilence!

We returned to Ardent-Hall, as the chariot of Surraya was ſinking behind the diſtant hills. On approaching the houſe, we beheld a ſcene of extraordinary commotion. All was hurry and confuſion.—Men and boys, houſehold ſervants and labourers, all ſeemed engaged in the purſuit of ſome inviſible object. At one part of the lawn, we beheld Doctor Sceptic and Mr. Puzzledorf, cautiouſly ſtepping along, and carefully peeping into every buſh they paſſed; at another place, we ſaw Sir Caprice, attended by the reſt of the philoſophers, carrying a large net—which, with much care, they ſoftly ſpread upon a hedge, and then began to beat the roots of the ſhrubs that compoſed it, in the moſt furious manner.

"What is the matter?" cried my companion, to a lad who was running paſt us. "What is the occaſion of all this buſtle? What, in the name of goodneſs, are you all about?" "Catching

Sparrows, Sir," returned the lad, in breathleſs hurry. " Catching Sparrows!" repeated the good Steward. " Philoſophers, catching Sparrows! That is doing ſome good with their learning, indeed! If they had begun to this work ſooner, the early corn in the South field would have been the better for it!"

As my mind has not yet been ſufficiently contaminated by the practices of Chriſtians, to take pleaſure in beholding miſery inflicted upon any part of the animated creation, I haſtened from this cruel ſcene, and took refuge in my own apartment. After ſome time ſpent in meditating on the cruel diſpoſitions of Europeans, and in performing poojah to the benignant Dewtah of our fathers —I deſcended, to pay my reſpects to Miſs Ardent, whoſe voice I heard in the Hall. " How happy it is, that you have returned to-night!" exclaimed ſhe, on perceiving me. " You have come in time, to aſſiſt at the moſt wonderful of all diſcoveries! What will your friends in India think, when you tell them, that ſparrows may be changed into honey-bees?"

It is a ſubject, on which none of my friends could poſſibly entertain a doubt, returned I; the tranſmigration of ſoul,

from body to body, is evidently neceſſary for its purification.—It is the doctrine of the Vedas—and its authority is unqueſtionable. "But the change I ſpeak of, has nothing to do with the doctrine of tranſmigration," rejoined Miſs Ardent. "*Our* ſparrows are ſtill to continue *good* and *real* ſparrows: it is only their inſtincts, that are to undergo a change, from the power of *external circumſtances*. So young Sceptic declared this morning at breakfaſt, and my brother, whoſe imagination takes fire at every new idea, declared inſtantly, that the experiment ſhould be made. It is true," continued Miſs Ardent, "this theory is not confined to ſparrows—The reaſoning faculties, of which we, poor two-legged animals are ſo proud—and the various inſtincts, which mark each tribe of the brute creation, all equally originate in a combination of *external circumſtances*. And, according to the arguments of the young philoſopher, I ſee no reaſon, why, by a proper courſe of education, a monkey may not be a Miniſter of State, or a gooſe, Lord Chancellor, of England."

Here a ſtop was put to our converſation, by the entrance of the gentlemen each of whom was ſo full of his deeds of proweſs, in the engagement with the ſparrows, that he could talk of nothing

elſe. One hundred ſparrows, were already taken priſoners:—but as this was only one third of the number declared neceſſary to form a hive, a reward was offered by the Baronet, for each live ſparrow that ſhould be brought to the Hall in the courſe of the ſucceeding day:—a meaſure which was crowned with ſuch ſucceſs, that, before ſun-ſet on the following evening, the number was declared complete.

Another tedious day elapſed, before the hut deſtined for their future reſidence, could be finiſhed; this was made exactly after the model of thoſe of the domeſtic bees, which in this country, are built of ſtraw, made into ſmall bundles, and bound together by the fibres of an aquatic plant. This hut, or hive, as it is called, bore the ſame proportion to its model, as the ſize of a ſparrow does to that of a bee; it was furniſhed with croſs ſticks for the ſupport of the combs, and that the ſparrows might have no apology for not beginning immediately to work, great care was taken that no convenience uſually afforded to the bees, ſhould be wanting.—After undergoing a careful examination by the philoſophers, this huge-ſparrow-hive was placed upon a platform, that had been reared for its reception; and the ſparrows having been

brought in baſkets to the ſpot, Sir Caprice Ardent, in preſence of all the philoſophers, with his own hand, pair by pair, depoſited them in their new abode. The apparent ſatisfaction with which they entered their hive, gave ſuch a convincing proof of the power of external circumſtances, as already rendered Sir Caprice a complete convert to the ſyſtem. At the concluſion of the ceremony, he cordially ſhook hands with the young philoſopher, and requeſting the reſt of the party would excuſe him for the evening, he retired to his ſtudy, to begin a journal of theſe important proceedings, with which he intended to illuminate the world.

At the firſt indication of the dawn of morning, I went, as is my conſtant practice, to the river ſide, and after the performance of the accuſtomary poojah, and having bathed in the refreſhing ſtream, I ſtrolled into that part of the garden, where the honey-making ſparrows were placed.

It was at an hour when my meditations have here never been diſturbed by the appearance of a fellow mortal. Judge then of my ſurpriſe, at beholding the Baronet, who, wrapped in his night-robes, ſtood at the ſide of the new erected hut, liſtening with eager ears, to catch the firſt ſound that ſhould emanate from

its precincts—on perceiving me, he made the ſignal of ſilence, and then beckoning me to approach—enquired in a ſoft whiſper, whether I did not hear the ſparrows hum? I told him, that I did indeed hear a humming noiſe; but believed, that it proceeded from a ſolitary bee, which was hovering over the adjoining ſhrubs. Chagrined at my diſcovery, the Baronet turned from me, in diſpleaſure, and went into the houſe.

Many, were the viſits, which, in the courſe of this day, were made to the new hive. It was ſoon diſcovered, that the ſparrows had been ſo far impelled by the preſſure of *exiſting circumſtances*, as to go abroad in the morning, in queſt of neceſſary food; and it was hoped by the philoſophers, that, as is the cuſtom of bees, they would return before the decline of day, to depoſit their yellow ſpoils. But alas! fallacious is the hope of mortals! The ſhades of evening arrived, and night ſucceeded, ſpreading her dark mantle over the face of Nature, but not a ſparrow appeared!

Miſs Ardent, whoſe knowledge extends to all the particulars of rural economy, on perceiving the vexation of her brother, ſuggeſted the idea, that the ſparrows had probably ſwarmed on ſome tree in the neighbourhood, where they might

remain in ſafety till the following day; "and then," continued ſhe, "if they ſhew any inclination to fly off, they may eaſily be fixed, by beating the frying-pans, as they do to a ſwarm of bees."

This hint from Miſs Ardent, re-kindled the expiring flame of hope in the breaſts of the philoſophers.——Next morning, which proved a very rainy one, word was brought, that a number of the fugitives were ſeen in a hawthorn-tree, at the bottom of the lawn—thither the philoſophers inſtantly repaired, each armed with ſome culinary inſtrument, which, as ſoon as they reached the place, they began to beat, in ſuch a manner as might have arreſted the Sun in the entrance of the jaws of the Crocodile!

Loſt was the labour of the philoſophers! who, in this inſtance, exerted their talents in vain. Inſtead of gathering together in a cluſter, as was expected, no ſooner did the diſcordant ſounds from the inſtruments of the philoſophers reach the hearing of the ſparrows, than away they flew to another tree. Thither they were again purſued, but ſtill the more noiſe that was made, the leſs did the ſparrows ſeem inclined to liſten. The maſter of the bees, declared, that he had never ſeen a ſwarm ſo unmanageable!

Wet, and wearied, Sir Caprice and his learned gueſts, at length returned into the houſe. Miſs Ardent, and Mr. Axiom, thought it a good opportunity to laugh at the ſyſtem of the young philoſopher; who, on his part, defended the infallibility of his Idol, by declaring, that the experiment had not been fully made:—that the habits of old ſparrows were not eaſily conquered;—but that young ones, or young birds of any kind, he was ſtill convinced, if taken before their habits were ſufficiently formed, would be found to obey the neceſſity of exiſting circumſtances, exactly as did the little uſeful inſects, of whoſe inſtinctive ſagacity, ignorance had ſaid ſo much.

The hint was not loſt upon the Baronet. A reward for neſtlings, of every deſcription, was again offered: and again attended with the wiſhed-for ſucceſs.—Ah! how many loving pairs among the feathered tribes, were, for the ſake of this experiment, bereft of their infant families! The groves reſounded with the plaints of woe! But little pain did the ſorrows of the mourners give to the heart of the young ſyſtemiſt. By his advice, the little birds, after having had their bills rubbed with honey, were ſhut up in the hive, with a portion of the ſame ſweet food, for their ſubſiſtance.

On the evening of the third day, which was the concluſion of their deſtined term of probation, the entrance to the hive was opened, but not a bird came forth; every method was taken to entice them abroad —but in vain. At length, by the aſſiſtance of the ſervants, their habitation was ſo far raiſed, as to enable the philoſophers to take a peep within. Sight of horrors! and ſmell, ſtill worſe than the ſight! The lifeleſs corpſes of the three hundred half-fledged neſtlings lay at the bottom of their hive, in a promiſcuous heap— "They have effectually ſwarmed at laſt!" ſaid Mr. Axiom.—Neither the Baronet, nor the young philoſopher, ſtaid to make any remark—but every one putting his fingers to his noſe—impelled by the *neceſſity* of *exiſting circumſtances*, hurried from the diſmal ſcene."

Such, Maandaara, are the illuſive phantoms which the all pervading ſpirit, the ſovereign Maya, preſents to the perception of metaphyſical Philoſophers!

May Ganeſa, averting calamity, preſerve to thee the uſe of thy ſenſes! And may the poojah performed for thy friend, by the holy Bramins of Almora, preſerve his mind from the contamination of ſyſtems! What can I ſay more?

LETTER XVII.

MY time, for theſe two paſt days, has been occupied in a manner, that, I hope, will give pleaſure to Maandaara.

I have been engaged in tranſlating for your peruſal, the greateſt part of a very long epiſtle, with which Doctor Severan has had the goodneſs to favour his unworthy ſervant.

According to previous agreement, I tranſmitted to him, all that I had written to you ſince my arrival at Ardent-Hall; intreating him to favour me with ſuch ſtrictures upon it, as he thought might be neceſſary, towards giving me more juſt ideas upon the ſubjects of which I had treated.

In his obſervations, the Doctor does not follow me through the particular ſyſtems of the philoſophers; but ſpeaks, in general terms, of the effects produced, by what he calls Scepticiſm; which, according to the great Engliſh Coſha, is the art of doubting. But you ſhall have it, as nearly as the different idioms of the two languages will permit, in his own words.——After opening his letter with the uſual exordium, he thus proceeds:

" Knowing the ardour with which you purſue knowledge, and the ſtrong inclination that impels you to inveſtigate the cauſes of the different phenomena which preſent themſelves to your obſervation, I cheerfully comply with your requeſt.

" The hiſtory of Literature is intimately connected with the revolutions of Empires; and among all the rude ſtorms which have aſſailed it, in none did it ſuffer more, than in that which it endured, together with the government, of ancient Rome. Literature was, by this event, effectually driven from thoſe countries where it had formerly flouriſhed; and, during a long period (emphatically diſtinguiſhed by our hiſtorians, by the epithet of *dark*) learning was almoſt completely obliterated. In this æra of ignorance, ſuperſtition eſtabliſhed her gloomy reign; and when the attention of men was once more turned to literary purſuits, the objects they had to ſurmount were new and numerous, and of a nature not very eaſily to be ſubdued.

" Inſtead of that free communication, which had formerly been permitted to men, they were now fettered by the tyrannical edicts of Kings and Prieſts; the inveſtigation of truth being equally

hoſtile to the intereſts of both. While freedom of diſcuſſion was thus reſtrained, the faculties of the human mind were benumbed, and truth and falſhood were confounded together. Crude ſpeculations were uſhered into the world, with the authority of truths; and not only was ſcepticiſm propagated by means of the promulgation of opinions, nurtured in ignorance, but encreaſed from that propenſity which the mind has, when newly freed from reſtrictions, to ruſh from one extreme to another.

"From the nature of our conſtitution (whoſe ſpirit is toleration) and from the freedom of our religion from ſuperſtition, ſcepticiſm has made little progreſs here, in compariſon of what it has done upon the Continent. There its triumph has been in proportion to the blind obedience exacted to the national ſuperſtition, to which men of ſenſe and obſervation could not, contrary to the dictates of their reaſon, ſubſcribe; and from that propenſity of the human mind, which I have juſt mentioned, theſe formed ſyſtems for themſelves, as diſtant from the truth, as the doctrines of the high prieſts of the country were from the pure precepts of Chriſtianity.

"The only ſpecies of ſceptics that abound in this kingdom, are not think-

ing, but may be called *talking* ſceptics. Theſe are men of ſhallow underſtandings, and cold hearts; who feeling their incapacity to attract attention, by going on in the ordinary path, endeavour to gain it by ſtating opinions which may aſtoniſh their hearers, and acquire them ſome degree of applauſe, for their ingenuity and boldneſs. It may, indeed, be obſerved of this claſs, that they take ſpecial care never to utter their oracles before thoſe that are capable of entering into arguments with them, though they deliver themſelves with dogmatical aſſurance before the ignorant and illiterate.

" But let not my noble friend imagine from this account of ſcepticiſm, or from his own penetrating obſervation on the conduct of the gentlemen at Ardent-Hall, that metaphyſical enquiry is without its uſe. Such enquiry expands the powers of the human mind, enlarges the underſtanding, and, by placing the ſcience of morals on a true foundation, tends to encreaſe the happineſs of ſociety.

" Would its profeſſors purſue the ſame plan of inveſtigation that has been ſo ſucceſsfully adopted by natural philoſophers, that of firſt making themſelves well acquainted with facts, and thoroughly inveſtigating them, before they draw

concluſions, they would perceive the neceſſity of allowing firſt principles, which are ſo ſelf-evident as not to admit of any direct proof. Indeed, I do not heſitate to aſſert, that almoſt all the errors of metaphyſicians have ariſen from their neglect of natural philoſophy.—The extreme accuracy, and exact preciſion, that is requiſite in the inveſtigation of the phenomena of the material world, would induce like habits of reaſoning in regard to that of the mental: while that Coloſſus of Scepticiſm, I mean Atheiſm, would by acquaintance with the works of Nature, be utterly annihilated.

"I have endeavoured to explain myſelf to my noble friend as clearly as poſſible on the ſubject of his letter; and ſhall only add, that true philoſophy is never the companion of arrogance and vanity. While it inveſtigates with aſſiduity, and pronounces with diffidence; they aſſert with boldneſs and give the crude conjectures of fancy, for the ſound deductions of truth.

"The natural turn of my mind, and ſtill more the object which have for the greateſt part of my life occupied my attention, have effectually precluded me from ſceptical opinions, and rendered me callous to the ſophiſtry of their promoters—but it has always appeared to me,

that where freedom of diſcuſſion is permitted, there ſcepticiſm and infidelity will be but little known."

Such, Maandaara, are the opinions of the *natural philoſopher*. The Philoſophers at Ardent-Hall declare, that it is a pity ſo good a man ſhould have ſo many odd prejudices. I confeſs, that, to me, who have been accuſtomed to behold with reverence, the ſelf-inflicted torture of holy men—the noble enthuſiaſm of the worſhippers of Syſtem is object of more veneration. It is true, theſe philoſophers hold it not neceſſary to mortify the body, or to bring the irregular paſſions under ſubjection. But what is the ſevereſt penance of the moſt pious Yogee, compared to the utter dereliction of eternal happineſs? By hope, a man is ſupported through many ſorrows, but, on the ſhrine of his Idol, the philoſophic Sannaſſee, makes a voluntary ſacrifice of even Hope itſelf.—On the ſyſtem that he worſhips, his thoughts for ever dwell, on it, his tongue for ever runs: and while it excluſively occupies every avenue to his ſoul, he, with a ſuperlative degree of modeſty, beſtows the epithet of *prejudiced enthuſiaſt*, on the votary of Chriſtianity. How amiable is this condeſcenſion!

Shall I confeſs to my friend—that to my weak mind, the enlightening converſation of the philoſophers had become ſo tireſome, as to render the arrival of Lady Grey, and her blooming party, a conſiderable relief to my wearied ſpirits? Till then, I was deſtitute of all reſource: Miſs Ardent, being too fond of diſputing with the philoſophers, and too much engaged by them to attend to me; and her ladyſhip ſo entirely engroſſed by her darling boy, as to be incapable of attending to any other object. This boy is ſuffered to become ſo troubleſome, that it entirely eradicates that benevolent complacency which one is accuſtomed to feel at the ſight of infant innocence. His parents behold the capriciouſneſs of his deſires increaſe with gratification, and the irraſcibility of his temper receives fuel from ſatiety: yet do they continue to pamper the over-pampered appetite, and to indulge each caprice of the wayward fancy, in full expectation, that in the *age of reaſon*, he will be able to exerciſe the virtue of ſelf-controul!—Yes, Maandaara, when, from the *preſſure of exiſting circumſtances*, ſparrows are taught to make honey, then ſhall the paſſions, which have been fanned into a flame by the breath of indulgence, liſten to the voice of moderation!

You may, perhaps, imagine, that the ſociety of a young and lovely female, ſuch as is Miſs Julia Ardent, would be a dangerous trial to a man of my ſenſibility. But, alas! my friend, you know not how effectually the mixture of inſipidity and haughtineſs can blunt the arrows of Cama! It is perhaps, for this reaſon, and to preſerve the hearts of young men from the influence of female charms, that theſe qualities are ſo carefully inſtilled at the ſeminaries of female education, which were deſcribed in ſuch true colours by the good Bramin Sheermaal. I was, at that time, too much blinded by the miſts of ignorance, to give credit to his report.—I had read the Chriſtian Shaſter, and was it not natural for me to ſuppoſe, that all who called themſelves Chriſtians, were guided by its precepts? From it I learned, that Chriſtian women were not prohibited from the cultivation of their underſtandings; and how could I conceive, that faſhion ſhould lead them to relinquiſh ſo glorious a privilege? How could I imagine, that Chriſtian parents ſhould be ſo much afraid of the improvement of their female offspring, as to give encouragement to ſeminaries formed on purpoſe for the excluſion of knowledge? It is true the information of Sheermaal, might have inſtructed me

in theſe things, but to the heart that is filled with prejudice, Wiſdom lifteth up her voice in vain.

Nothing but experience could have convinced me, that the cultivation of the rational faculties, ſhould, among the Chriſtian women of England, be ſo rare, that no ſooner can one of them emerge from the depths of ignorance, than ſhe is ſuſpected of aſſuming the airs of ſelf-importance and conceit. If ſhe has the knowledge of a ſchool-boy ſhe is thought vain of her learning. Nor are there many men of ſenſe among the Chriſtians, who would not prefer to the converſation of ſuch a woman, the impertinent tattle of the frivolous, the capricious, and the ignorant. Nor is this much to be wondered at, when we conſider, that, by the pains taken, from the earlieſt infancy, to ſap the foundation of every ſolid improvement, the imagination becomes ſo much ſtronger than the judgment, that of the ſmall number of females who, under all the diſadvantages of cuſtom and prejudice, dare to diſtinguiſh themſelves by the cultivation of their talents, few ſhould do more than exchange one folly for another:—ſubſtitute the love of theory, for the love of dreſs—or an admiration of the mental gewgaws of flimſy ſentiment, and high ſounding decla

mation, for that of trifles of another kind.

But though I confeſs my error, and acknowledge, that I deceived myſelf in extending my notions of Chriſtianity to every Chriſtian, and of excellence to every female, of England, I ſtill ſee ſome who amply juſtify the expectations that were formed by my ſanguine mind. In Lady Grey and her daughters, I find all that I had expected from the females of their country; all that my friend Severan had deſcribed.

With them, arrived the two youngeſt daughters of Sir Caprice Ardent, one of whom has received her education under the care of Lady Grey, while the other has to her Aunt, Miſs Ardent, been indebted for her inſtruction. At firſt ſight, one is ſtruck with the ſimiliarity, of their features. They are both beauteous as the opening roſe-bud, when the dew of morning trembles on its leaf. The eyes of each, ſparkling with vivacity, are dazzling as a bright dagger ſuddenly unſheathed. They are both ſhaped by the hand of elegance, and both move with the ſame degree of grace. Yet, notwithſtanding this ſimilarity, the oppoſite characters impreſſed by education is viſible in each.—While over the graces of Miſs Caroline, is thrown the bewitching veil of timidity,

and her every action is bound in the ſilken fetters of decorum; the adopted daughter of Miſs Ardent ſpeaks her ſentiments with an energy that has never known reſtraint. Though open to conviction, and ready to confeſs error with the candor of a noble mind, ſhe yields leſs to the authority of perſons, than to that of reaſon; and it is eaſy to perceive, has been early taught, that to be weak, and to be amiable, are two very different things.

An incident which occurred to the three ſiſters, in the courſe of their morning's walk, will ſerve to illuſtrate theſe obſervations upon their characters.

It appears, that having ſtrayed into a narrow lane, they were frightened at the appearance of a horſe and cart, coming towards them ſo quickly, as to leave them no other method of eſcaping, than to climb a ſteep bank, and to get over the pailing into their father's park,—Miſs Olivia, with the activity of an Antelope, led the way, and, with ſome difficulty, aſſiſted her ſiſters to follow her example. Juſt as ſhe had prevailed upon the terrified Miſs Julia, who long inſiſted upon the impoſſibility of her making the attempt, they beheld near them an old man, who excited by the ſcreams and promiſed rewards of Miſs Julia, attempted

to lay hold of the horſes. To ſtop them, his feeble efforts were ineffectual! the animals were too ſtrong, and too ſpirited, to be managed by his aged arm. After a ſhort ſtruggle, the horſes ſprung over him and in a moment the mangled and bleeding body was diſcovered lying, to all appearance, lifeleſs, in the track which the cart had paſſed.

Miſs Julia redoubled her efforts to eſcape; ſhe ſucceeded, and flew to the houſe, which ſhe no ſooner reached, than, as is cuſtomary with young ladies upon ſuch occaſions, ſhe fainted away. When ſhe had fainted for a decent length of time, ſhe ſcreamed, laughed, and cried alternately and continued long enough in the ſecond ſtage of fright, called *An Hyſteric Fit*, to draw round her the greateſt part of the family. Indeed, there was full employment for them all. One held to her noſe a bunch of burnt feathers; another chafed her temples with a drug, called Hartſhorn; a third held to her lips drops and cordials, while the reſt ran about the room, opening the windows, ringing the bells, and giving directions to the ſervants.

While we were thus engaged, in flew Miſs Olivia. But what a figure! The few tattered remnants of her muſlin robe, beſmeared with blood, ſtreamed in the

air ; eagerneſs ſparkled in her eyes, and an unſpeakable glow of ardour animated her countenance. Totally unconcerned for her ſiſter, on whom, indeed, ſeemed to dart a look of contempt, ſhe haſtily ſnatched the hartſhorn, and the cordials, and deſiring, with a tone of authority, all the men to follow her, ſhe again flew off, with the ſwiftneſs of a bird of Paradiſe, who has been frightened by the voice of the hunter.

Miſs Julia was left to recover as ſhe could. Every ſoul deſerted her. Men and maids, philoſophers and footmen, all hurried after the fair Olivia; who like the meteor which floats on the dark-boſomed cloud of evening, was ſeen gliding before us. At length we reached the lane, and there ſeated on the ground, we beheld the twin-ſiſter of Olivia. Her fair arms ſupported the unfortunate old man, whoſe wounded head, reclined upon her lap. His wounds were however bound up. The robe of Olivia, having been torn in pieces for the purpoſe. And now, with a tenderneſs which equalled her activity, ſhe knelt at the old man's ſide, and carried to his pale lips the cordials ſhe had, with ſo little ceremony, ſnatched from her ſiſter. The old man at length ſo far revived, as to pronounce, with feeble

but impreſſive accents, the bleſſings of his God on the angel-forms who had ſaved his life. He was with all poſſible care, by the direction of the two Ladies, carried up to the houſe. A ſurgeon was immediately ſent for, who, on examining his wounds declared them to be of ſuch a nature, that if he had not received the aſſiſtance beſtowed upon him by the two Ladies, he muſt inevitably have periſhed. "Then," cried the lovely Caroline, "it is to my ſiſter Olivia, that he owes his life!—But for her, I ſhould have followed my ſiſter Julia into the houſe, to call for help; it was Olivia alone, who had the courage to return to him, and the preſence of mind to afford him relief." "No, Caroline;" replied Olivia, "without you, I could have done nothing. When I looked back, and ſaw how the poor man bled, I knew he could not live, without aſſiſtance; but it was you, by whom the aſſiſtance was principally beſtowed." "Don't ſpeak any more about it, for Heaven's ſake!" cried Miſs Julia; "the very thought of it makes me ſick. I would not have looked at, him, for a thouſand worlds! I wonder how you could have ſo little ſenſibility!"

"Senſibility, my dear niece," ſaid Lady Grey, "is but too often another word for ſelfiſhneſs. Believe me, that

that ſenſibility which turns with diſguſt from the ſight of miſery it has the power to relieve, is not of the right kind. To weep at the imaginary tale of ſorrow exhibited in a Novel or a Tragedy, is to indulge a feeling, in which there is neither vice nor virtue: but when the compaſſion which touches the heart leads the hands to afford relief, and benevolence becomes a principle of action; it is then, and then only, that it is truly commendable." "I perceive that your Ladyſhip has ſtudied Mr. Hume's Principles of General utility," ſaid Mr. Axiom. "No," ſaid Mr. Puzzledorf; "it is evident, her Ladyſhip has taken her opinions from *my Eſſay on the Eternal and Neceſſary Fitneſs and Congruity of Things.*" "I have taken them," ſaid her Ladyſhip, "from the doctrines and Examples of Jeſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles."

In this life, "compoſed of good and evil," this younger ſiſter of the Baronet has had her ſhare of calamity. Her marriage with Sir Phillip Grey, was an union of mutual affection, founded on mutual eſteem, and productive of mutual felicity.

Though a Baronet, his eſtate was not extenſive; and from it a numerous family of brothers and ſiſters were to be

provided with fortunes, ſuited to their birth. Sir Philip and his Lady, having the ſame views and opinions, eaſily ſettled the plan of their future life. They took the management of their eſtate into their own hands: taſte and elegance became a ſubſtitute for ſplendor: and the propriety of domeſtic arrangement, amply compenſated for the abſence of a few articles of ſuperfluous luxury. But though they retrenched in oſtentation, they decreaſed not in hoſpitality; their houſe was the refuge of the diſtreſſed, the home of merit, and the central point of all the genius and the talent which the ſurrounding country could boaſt. In addition to the care of their fortune they took upon themſelves the ſole care of the education of their children.—But, notwithſtanding all theſe avocations, they ſtill found time for the purſuit of literature, for which their taſte remained undiminiſhed. Lady Grey was not only (as is univerſally the cuſtom in this country*) the companion of her huſband's table—but the partner of his ſtudies; and by him, her opinions were as much reſpected, as her perſon was beloved.

* It is by ſome of the Hindoo Authors, mentioned as one of the indiſpenſible qualities of a good wife—that ſhe never preſumes to eat, until her huſband has finiſhed.

Years rolled on, and each returning ſeaſon ſaw an increaſe of the happineſs of this well-matched pair. But who can give ſtability to the felicity of mortals? While yet in the prime of life, this amiable and happy huſband was ſeized by the ruthleſs hand of diſeaſe, in whoſe rude graſp, the vigour of life was blaſted, and the gay hopes of future enjoyment daſhed on the rocks of diſappointment. His ſenſes, of which he ſuffered a temporary deprivation, were gradually reſtored; but the wheels of life were clogged; the vital fluid ſtagnated in the veins, or moved with ſuch lingering and unequal pace, as was unequal to the re-animation of the palſied limbs: nor did he ever recover a ſufficient degree of ſtrength, to enable him to quit his apartment. In ſuch a ſituation, in vain would a man have looked for conſolation to the pretty face of a fool. In vain would he have expected it from the trifling accompliſhments, to the acquirement of which, the moſt precious years of life are commonly devoted. Alas! though Lady Grey would have ſpoken French, with the fluency of a Pariſian; though ſhe would have danced with the grace of an angel; though ſhe could have painted a flower, or a butterfly, even without the aſſiſtance of her drawing-maſter, and run

over the keys of her harpſichord with the moſt aſtoniſhing rapidity—little comfort would it have given to the heart of her ſick huſband.

In an underſtanding enriched by the accumulations of Wiſdom, a temper regulated by the precepts of Chriſtianity, and a heart replete with tenderneſs, Sir Philip found a more ſolid reſource. By theſe endowments, was his Lady enabled to manage the affairs of her family, and the concerns of his eſtate; to watch over the education of her children; and, by the unremitting attentions of endearing affection, to cheer the ſpirits that were broken by confinement, and ſoothe the ſufferings of a bed of pain. Nor was the performance of theſe multifarious duties the ſudden effect of a ſhort-lived energy. During the ſix years in which her huſband lingered under the partial dominion of death, the fortitude of his Lady remained unſhaken, her perſeverance unabated, and when at length his ſoul was ſuffered to depart from the decayed manſion of mortality, though her heart was poſſeſſed with too much ſenſibility, not to feel with ſorrow the ſtroke of ſeparation, the aſſured hope of a re-union with the object of her affections, in the regions of immortality, afforded conſolation to her wounded

mind.—Yes Maandaara, notwithſtanding all I have ſaid in favour of this excellent woman, truth obliges me to confeſs, that the powers of her mind are not ſufficiently enlarged to embrace the doctrines of Atheiſm! She is blind enough, not to perceive the evident ſuperiority of any of the ſyſtems of the philoſophers to the Chriſtian faith; and weakly aſſerts, that if all that was taught by Jeſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles, was generally practiſed, it would be no great injury to the happineſs of ſociety.—She takes great pleaſure in the contemplation of a future ſtate, and carries her *prejudices* ſo far, as to declare, that ſhe, conſiders the account of it, as given in Scripture, as little leſs eaſy of belief, than the ſyſtem of Mr. Puzzledorf; and that ſhe finds it more ſatisfactory to reſt her hopes on the promiſes of her Saviour, than on the permanent exiſtence of the little imperiſhable ſtamina at the top of the noſe!!

Not contented with making the precepts and doctrines of Chriſtianity the guide of her own conduct, ſhe has endeavoured to inſtill them into the minds of her children; and ſo well has ſhe ſucceeded, that her eldeſt ſon, at the age of nineteen, though poſſeſſed of an uncommon degree of learning, ſenſe, and ſpirit—

is not aſhamed to confeſs that he is a Chriſtian!

Alas! my friend, how ſhall I inform you of the events of this morning?—The number of philoſophers is diminiſhed! The promiſing ſprout of Infidelity, whoſe early genius gave ſuch hopes of future greatneſs—he, by the proweſs of whoſe pen, it was expected that religion ſhould be routed from the world—the nephew of Doctor Sceptic—this morning, took the privilege of a philoſopher, and ſhot himſelf through the head!

As I find upon enquiry, that this is a privilege which is often claimed, and a practice, that is very common with the philoſophers of England, I ſuppoſe it is found to be conducive to general utility, and agreeable to the eternal and neceſſary congruity and fitneſs of things.

The *exiſting circumſtances* which impelled this young man to make ſo philoſophical an exit, have been, to all appearance, fully explained; and as you may have ſome curioſity concerning them, I ſhall briefly ſtate them for your peruſal.

It appears that his father, a man of rigid morals and auſtere devotion, who lived in the exerciſe of much piety towards God, and much charity to his fellow-creatures, ſome years ago, re-

ceived into his family the orphan niece of his wife. She was educated with his own children, and shared with them the benefit of his instructions and the tenderness of his paternal love. Her beauty made an early impression upon the heart of her cousin, and such was her merit in the eyes of the old man, that, preferring the happiness of his son, to the aggrandizement of his family, he consented that their union should take place, as soon as the young man should have attained his one and twentieth year. It was agreed, that he should employ the interval in what is called an attendance upon the Temple; and, according to a previous invitation from his uncle, Doctor Sceptic, should during that period take up his residence at his house, in the capital.—There the young man had not long resided, till a new light burst upon his eyes; he saw things as he had never seen them before: saw that religion was a bug-bear, made to keep the vulgar in awe:—saw that his father was a fool; and, as I have before mentioned, learnt to laugh at his prejudices, and his piety, in a very edifying manner.

In the summer, he returned into the country; found his cousin lovely and affectionate as ever, and had no great difficulty in initiating her into all the

myſteries of Scepticiſm. They both found it a charming thing to be ſo much wiſer than their inſtructors; and wondered they could ſo long have been blinded by prejudices, whoſe abſurdities were ſo obvious. The young man went again to town, became every day more enlightened, and ſoon diſcovered that marriage was a piece of prieſt-craft—an ignoble bondage—a chain, which no *man of honour* ſhould ſubmit to wear.

He haſtened to return to the country, to communicate to his couſin this important diſcovery. Finding ſome difficulty in convincing her underſtanding of the truth of this new doctrine, he applied to the ſoftneſs of her heart; he pretended to doubt of her affection, appealed to her generoſity, and—completed her ruin.

Still the poor girl was not ſufficiently convinced of the propriety of her conduct, not to entertain ſome doubts and apprehenſions, which the young philoſopher ſoon grew tired of hearing. Finding that their connection could not be much longer concealed, ſhe grew more importunate, and he liſtened to her importunity with increaſed indifference. At length, to avoid her remonſtrances, he came to Ardent Hall, where he had been introduced by his Uncle, who made

the offer of his ſervices to aſſiſt Sir Caprice in writing his Book upon the *Supremacy of Reaſon*, with which the Baronet is ſoon to enlighten the world.—The young man willingly engaged in the taſk. But fatal are the effects of early prejudices to the peace of a philoſopher! His thoughts became gloomy; his ſpeech has often of late been incoherent; and every action betrayed the reſtleſſneſs of a mind at war with itſelf. Even his zeal againſt the advocates of Chriſtianity, had in it a degree of bitterneſs which ſhewed that they ſtill retained an authority over his mind, at which, though his pride revolted, his underſtanding could not conquer.

For the laſt few days, he had appeared to exert more than uſual ſpirits. He laughed, when he had no occaſion; talked, when he had nothing to ſay; and ſeduloufly ſought the company of the Ladies, whom he had before neglected with the frigidity of indifference. Yeſterday evening, his ſpirits were raiſed tō a pitch which gave reaſon to ſuſpect intoxication. When he retired to his chamber, it appears that he did not go to bed, but employed himſelf in writing letters to his father, all of which he had again torn, and ſcattered about the room. At four o'clock in the morning, the re-

port of a piſtol was heard: the family were inſtantly alarmed; the door of his chamber was broken open; and, on entering it, the firſt object that preſented itſelf to view, was the lifeleſs corſe of the young philoſopher, extended on the floor.

On the table at which he had been writing, lay two letters. The firſt was from his father, and feelingly deſcriptive of the agony of a parent's heart, on the firſt diſcovery of a ſon's unworthineſs. The other was from his couſin. It pourtrayed the picture of a virtuous mind, ſtruggling with the dread of infamy, bitterly regretting the loſs of peace and ſelf-reſpect, and gently reproaching the author of its calamities, for depriving her of that hope which is the reſource of the wretched, the comfort of the penitent, and the ſovereign balm for the evils of life! "To her," ſhe ſaid, "hope was a ſhadow, which had paſſed away. Once, there was a time, when ſhe could have ſmiled at calamity, endured the ſeverity of pain with unſhrinking reſignation, and, ſupported by faith, have cheerfully reſigned her ſoul into the boſom of her Creator. Now, doubt and darkneſs ſat upon the realm of death; ſhe feared to die, but ſhe had not courage to live.—Death," ſhe

ſaid, " was the only refuge of deſpair; to it ſhe fled, to ſave her from the reproaches of the world, and the torments of her own perturbed mind"—and with an affecting apoſtrophe to the days of unſpotted innocence, this unhappy creature concludes her melancholy epiſtle; which, it ſeems, ſhe had no ſooner written, than ſhe put an end to her exiſtence, by plunging into the ſea!

Such has been the effects of performing poojah to Syſtem, in the family of the Sceptics!

Ah! how little do the Chriſtians of this country conſider the nature and extent of the obligations they are under to thoſe enlightened men, whoſe indefatigable endeavour it is, to free them from the narrow prejudices of their religion! O, ye incomparable moraliſts, who ſo freely blow out your own brains, from a ſenſe of *general utility*, little doth the world conſider how much it is indebted to your labours!

Reverence to Ganeſa!

The previous arguments of the philoſophers in praiſe of ſuicide, had not ſufficiently enlightened the minds of the family of Ardent-Hall, to prevent their regarding the death of young Sceptic as a melancholy cataſtrophe! Though the difference of character give a variety

to the expreſſion of their feelings, all appeared to feel. The ſhock was univerſal.

The worſhippers of Syſtem, and the votaries of Chriſtianity, appeared, indeed, to be affected in a very oppoſite manner. The former, who had, till this event, been ſo clamorous in ſupport of the pretenſions of their Idols, were all at once ſtruck dumb. Not one appeal was now made to *exiſting circumſtances*. Not one ray of hope darted from *the age of reaſon*. Nor did either *general utility*, or the *fitneſs of things*, appear in this juncture, to afford any comfort to their votaries. But while the lips of the philoſophers were ſealed in ſilence, thoſe of the Chriſtian religioniſts were opened. Their prejudices, indeed, appeared to have gained freſh ſtrength: theſe *prejudices*, which are calculated to foſter the ſenſibility of the tender heart, and to encreaſe the feelings of ſympathy, ſeemed likewiſe endowed with power to ſupport their votaries in the hour of affliction, to ſoften the rigour of anguiſh, and to preſerve from the tyranny of deſpair.

It muſt be confeſſed, that Lady Grey, amiable as ſhe is, had not ſufficient greatneſs of mind to applaud the heroiſm of the young philoſopher, or to ſpeak of his laſt action—but with a mixture of

pity, horror, and regret. With much feeling, did she deplore his having ever imbibed the *liberal opinions* that led to the destruction of his wife; the murder of his child; his own death, and the misery of his family.

The consolation of that unhappy family was the first object of her concern. Having seen Lady Ardent and the young Ladies set off for the house of a friend, to which they had been invited on the first accounts of the melancholy event; she hastened to the house of affliction; there to mingle the tears of sympathy; to speak comfort to the wounded heart; and, by sharing in its sorrows, to lessen their severity.—Such, Maandaara, are the offices pointed out by the prejudices of Christianity!

Deeming it improper at such a juncture, to incommode the family by the presence of a stranger, I took my leave of Sir Caprice Ardent, and left the Hall, impressed with a deep sense of the kindness and hospitality I had experienced beneath its roof.

Full of melancholy, I proceeded, without having fully determined on the route I was to pursue. To London, I was averse to return, and yet knew not how otherwise to dispose of myself. As I was debating this point with myself, while

the horſes were putting to my carriage, at the third ſtage of my journey, a chaiſe drove up to the Inn. From it alighted a gentleman—but, O ye Gods of my fathers! what was my ſurprize, on beholding, in this gentlemen, my former gueſt Mr. Denbeigh, the friend of Piercy! He, who had at Chunar, loaded me with ſo many marks of kindneſs and affection! Soon as the flutter of ſpirits which always accompanies an unexpected meeting, was a little ſubſided, he took from his port-folio a packet, on which I ſoon recognized the hand-writing of Maandaara. How did my heart beat at the ſight! I tear open the ſeals.—I read. I hear of the welfare of my friend, of the health of my child. Ah! my ſon! my ſon! What tender emotions does the mention of thy name raiſe in my boſom! When ſhall the ſoft cheek of my child, be patted by his father's hand? When ſhall my ears be gratified by the delicious muſic of my darling's gentle voice? Deteſted ſpirit of curioſity! too long have I ſacrificed to thee the trueſt, ſweeteſt joys, that gem the period of exiſtence!

My heart is too full to proceed. May He, who is Lord of the Keepers of the eight corners of the World, preſerve thee! May the adored wife of Veeſhnu be the friend of my child!!

Denbeigh, at the time I met him, was on his way to the place of his nativity. He requeſted me to accompany him to his father's houſe; and found in me no diſpoſition to reject a propoſal ſo agreeable to my inclination. We proceeded together in the ſame carriage. Converſed of India—of our friends at Calcutta:—talked of all the little incidents that had occurred during my reſidence in that city; the moſt trivial of which, appeared intereſting to the memory, on account of the pleaſing ideas with which it was aſſociated. Swiftly flew the wheels of our chariot, but more ſwiftly flew the rolling hours, which were occupied by this ſort of converſation.

About noon, on the ſecond day of our journey, we, by the direction of Denbeigh, ſtruck into a narrow bye-road, which following the courſe of a clear ſtream, winded through the midſt of a narrow valley. As we entered upon this road, the agitation of my companion became apparent. Every object that we paſſed, cauſed his heart to heave with tender emotion. In every ſhrub he recognized an old acquaintance, and in every tree he ſeemed to diſcover a long loſt friend. "Let us ſtop here," ſaid he, at a turn of the road: "the bridge for carriages is half a mile off, but I can

take you a nearer way." So saying, he
leaped out of the carriage, and I followed
his example. My friend surveyed the
scene around, and the soft tear of delight
glistened in his eyes. "There," said he,
"is the old thorn, which, at the close
of evening, I used to pass with such hasty
steps, not daring to look behind, from
fear of the fairies, who were said to
dance their rounds beneath its boughs.
There is the wood, whose filberts
were so alluring. There the pool, where
I used to lave the wave with my
naked limbs. On the moss-covered branch
of that beech tree was interwoven the
garland I once presented my
mistress, and half
lingered my arms, as
the yield-

one of a little rustic
one of
we beheld an
miles of the
and girl
rising up
the grass.
received.
and asking
recognize
the long estab-

ed.—He bounded forward—and taking a hand of each—while the burſting ſenſations of his heart choaked his utterance—gazed for a moment on the revered faces of his parents, and in the next, was in their arms. His poor mother could not, for a few minutes, reconcile herſelf to the darkneſs of his complexion, which fourteen years ſpent beneath the luſtre of an Indian ſky had changed from the fair red and white, ſuch as now adorns the face of his little nephew, to the deep brown ſhade, that marks the European Aſiatic. The good Lady gently puſhed him from her, to examine more minutely the features whoſe more delicate lines were engraven on her memory. He ſmiled.—In that ſmile, ſhe recognized the peculiar expreſſion of her darling's face, and fondly preſſed him to her maternal boſom.

During this ſcene, I ſtood a ſilent and unobſerved ſpectator; nor was it till after a conſiderable length of time, that Denbeigh ſufficiently recollected himſelf to introduce me to his parents. To be called the friend of their ſon, enſured my welcome; but, that I might not be any reſtraint on their converſation, I attached myſelf to the little folks, to whom Uncle Henry was no more than any other ſtranger.

As we approached the houſe, I obſerved, at an open window which fronts the orchard, a lovely girl, who ſeemed to view the party with a greater degree of intereſt, than curioſity alone could poſſibly inſpire. Twice ſhe came to the door, and twice returned irreſolute. At length, ſhe was obſerved by one of my little companions, who running towards her, called out, Uncle Henry is come! Uncle Henry is come! the words gave wings to her willing feet, ſhe flew down the walk, and in a minute her beauteous face was hid in the boſom of her brother.

The ſhrill voice of my little friend, had reached farther than the parlour. By the time we entered the Hall, the ſervants were aſſembled.—The old nurſe was the firſt who preſſed forward to ſalute the ſtranger—by whom ſhe was received with the kindneſs due to her affection and fidelity. Two other domeſtic companions of his youth ſtill remained in the family: tears ſpoke the ſincerity of the many welcomes they beſtowed on the traveller; while the hearty good-will with which he received their ſalutations, gave a convincing proof, that neither time nor diſtance had changed the diſpoſitions of his heart.

Mr. Denbeigh, with that delicacy of attention which is peculiar to a few chosen minds, provided for me an apartment in a detached house, where my Hindoo servants were furnished with every requisite for preparing our simple meals according to the religion and customs of our country. To this apartment I retired during the dining hour of the family; and by the time I returned, I found that an acquisition had been made to the happy party of united friends, by the arrival of the two married daughters of Mr. Denbeigh, accompanied by the husband of the eldest. The countenance of this gentleman justified the character given him by Denbeigh, of worth and good-nature. He was bred to business, and has by industry and application, obtained an ample share of the gifts of fortune, which he enjoys with cheerfulness, and bestows with the frankness of a generous heart. His wife seems happy in his affection, and in the enjoyment of a degree of good temper equal to his own.

The countenance of the second sister [illegible] strong resemblance to that of [illegible] speaks a soul endowed with [illegible]; a more refined sensibility, a more lively perception. When the arrival of

her husband (who had been detained by the business of his profession, which is that of a physician) was announced, I marked the emotion of her spirits. She presented him to her brother, with an air that seemed to demand his approbation of her choice; nor was she disappointed: the appearance of the young man was too prepossessing to fail of making an immediate interest in the favour of my friend, whose sentiments were no sooner perceived by his sister, who eagerly watched them in the expression of his countenance, than her eyes sparkled with delight.—In a few minutes more, my friend had the pleasure of embracing his two brothers: the eldest, who is a year his senior, is now priest of the neighbouring village. A man of mild aspect, and gentle manners. At an early age, he made a sacrifice of ambition to love, and married a young woman, whose dower was made up of beauty and good temper.

Of the numerous offspring with which she has presented him, the two eldest reside with their grandfather—the youngest has but two days seen the light; and all the others their uncles have promised to provide for. So that the good man looks with a smiling aspect upon futurity.

The youngeſt brother of my friend, is a Profeſſor of the Art of Surgery. A dapper little gentleman, with a ſmart wit, and perfumed handkerchief. His brother Henry ſays, he is a little affected by a diſorder called *Puppyiſm*, but that he has ſufficient ſtamina in his conſtitution to conquer the diſeaſe; which, it ſeems, is a very common one at this time of life.

Never did Calli*, in the progreſs of his eventful journey, behold a happier circle than that which now ſurrounded the hearth of Mr. Denbeigh. When I ſaw them ſit down at the ſupper-table, I began to think the cuſtom of ſocial meals not altogether ſo ridiculous as I had hitherto conſidered it. At the concluſion of the repaſt, the cordial wiſh of health was mutually exchanged; and a glaſs filled with generous wine, was preſſed to the lips of each, in token of ſincerity. The cheerful ſong went round: every voice was in uniſon to ſtrains of joy, and every countenance was irradiated with the ſmile of ſatisfaction. Before they parted for the night, the old gentleman, according to a very ſtrange cuſtom of his own, knelt down in the middle of his family, and while the tear of joy ſtrayed down his venerable cheeks, offered up the ſacri-

* Time.

fice of thankſgiving to the throne of the Eternal!

Alas! this poor gentleman is not ſufficiently enlightened to perform poojah to Syſtem. He has never been convinced, that vice and virtue are only qualities of imagination; and is deplorably ignorant of all theories, ſave that of a good conſcience.—Nor has his wife advanced one ſtep farther than himſelf, towards throwing off the prejudices of Chriſtianity.—And what is ſtill worſe —the manner in which they have rivetted theſe prejudices in the minds of their children, ſcarcely admits a hope, that any of them will ever become converts to Atheiſm, or have ſufficient ſpirit to exchange the morality of their Shaſter, for the doctrine of external circumſtances. On making enquiry of my friend concerning the cauſe of this phenomena, he informed me, that his father and mother, who were of different ſects of Chriſtians, agreed, that the religion taught their children ſhould not be indebted for its ſupport to the peculiar dogmas of either; but ſhould chiefly reſt on the authority of that Shaſter, which has ſo deeply incurred the diſpleaſure of the philoſophers.—His mother was the daughter of a prieſt of the ſect of Diſſenters, who had beſtowed ſuch particular pains on the

cultivation of her underſtanding, as actually qualified her for conducting the education of her own children.

It is, perhaps, to this uncommon and extraordinary circumſtance, that the children of Mr. Denbeigh are indebted for many of thoſe peculiarities which at preſent diſtinguiſh their characters. It is from this cauſe, that the daughters have become learned, without loſing their humility: that they are gay, without being frivolous: that in converſation, their ſprightlineſs is free from the lightneſs of vanity, and their ſenſorioufneſs from the arrogance of ſelf-conceit. Mrs. Denbeigh, not conſidering the preſervation of ignorance abſolutely neceſſary towards the perfection of the female character, never ſent her daughters to the ſeminaries that are eſtabliſhed for that purpoſe, but ſuffered them from infancy to partake with their brothers in every advantage of ſolid inſtruction.—Being early taught to make a juſt eſtimate of things, they learned how to value the performance of every duty; nor was their intention towards thoſe annexed by cuſtom to their ſituation, leſſened from a conſideration of their ſimplicity. In their minds the torch of knowledge was too fully lit, to lead to the dangerous path of ſingularity, into which unwary females have by its

feeble glimmering, been ſo oft betrayed. I can almoſt venture to aſſert, that the blooming Emma, at this moment manages the domeſtic economy of her father's houſe, with as much prudence and activity as could be expected from the moſt ignorant and accompliſhed female that ever iſſued from a *genteel boarding-ſchool.* That ſhe is as dutiful, as affectionate, as obedient to her parents, as if ſhe had never looked into any book but a Novel; and will regard their memory with as much filial veneration, as if they had never furniſhed her mind with an idea, or taught her any other duty, ſave how to dreſs and play at cards!!

The week that has elapſed ſince my arrival at Violet-Dale, has been ſpent in alternate viſits to the ſons, and ſons-in-law of Mr. Denbeigh. As the moſt beautiful ſymmetry of feature eludes the ſkill of the painter, ſo do the quiet ſatisfactions of life, though ſources of the trueſt pleaſure, bid defiance to the powers of deſcription; I ſhall therefore of this week only mention one little incident, which pleaſed, in ſpite of its ſimplicity.

On the ſecond day after our arrival, while Mr. and Mrs. Denbeigh, and the lovely Emma, were liſtening, with looks of complacency and delight, to the re-

cital made by my friend of ſome of his adventures in India, Mr. Denbeigh was informed, that a perſon wanted to ſpeak with him.—It was a country-man, who being by univerſal conſent, admitted into the parlour, declared his buſineſs. It was, to pay to the old gentleman a ſmall ſum of money, which, it appeared, had been lent, with little proſpect of return. He received for his punctuality, the encouragement of praiſe; and Emma, unbidden, aroſe from her embroidery, to preſent him ſome wine for himſelf, and ſweet-cake to take home to his children. The poor man was, by this kindneſs, emboldened to loquacity. "Yes," ſaid he to Mr. Denbeigh, "I defy the whole world to ſay, that Gilbert Grub ever remained one hour in any man's debt, after he was able to get out of it. And as your honour was ſo good to me in my neceſſity, and lent to me when no one elſe would, it was good reaſon to pay your honour firſt. But, perhaps, you have not heard of the ſtrange behaviour of Mr. Darnley?"

"Mr. Darnley!" repeated Emma ſuſpending her work to liſten.

"What of Mr. Darnley?" ſaid Mr. Denbeigh.

"Why, Sir, you muſt know," ſaid the peaſant, "that Old Benjamin Grub, who lived in one of Mr. Darnley's free cot-

tages, to whom, I am ſure, both your honour and theſe two good ladies have given many and many a ſhilling, died on Friday was eight days; and on opening his will, who do you think he ſhould have left his ſole heir, but Mr. Darnley?"

"What could the poor creature have to leave?" ſaid Mrs. Denbeigh. "He was the very picture of wretchedneſs."

"Aye, ſo he was," returned the garrulous old man; "and that was the very way he took to ſcrape together ſuch a mine of wealth. Would you believe it, Madam? In the very rags that covered him, fifty golden guineas were concealed, and a hundred more were found in his houſe; but no matter for that, if it had been ten times as much, it all went to Mr. Darnley.—And though to be ſure, we could not blame him for taking it—yet ſome of us thought it main hard, that while ſo many of his own fleſh and blood were in a ſtarving condition, all this ſtore of wealth ſhould go to one who had enough of his own."

"But, whilſt his own relations left him to ſtarve, had he not been ſupported by Mr. Darnley's bounty?" ſaid Mr. Denbeigh.

"Aye, that is true," ſaid the peaſant: "but, as old Sam Grub of the Mill, ſays, if any one of us had a-known of his

wealth, we would all have been as kind to him as the 'Squire."

"Mr. Darnley ought certainly to have made ſome preſent to the old man's relations," ſaid Mr. Denbeigh. "Aye, Sir, I thought he might ha' given ſome ſmall thing among us," ſaid the peaſant; "but never could have imagined, that he would have behaved in the way he did."

"Go on," ſaid Mr. Denbeigh knitting his brows.

The cheek of Emma grew pale: ſhe took up her needle, but remained in the attitude of attention, while the peaſant proceeded.

"You muſt know, Sir, that after having had a long confabulation with the Sexton, who is himſelf a Grub, the firſt thing the 'Squire did, was to ſend for all the Grubs in the pariſh, man and woman, to come to the funeral. Some of us were ſo much ſtomached, that we did not much like to go. But, ſays I, though Benjamin has been unnatural to us, that is no reaſon that we ſhould be unnatural to him. So we all went yeſterday morning, at the hour appointed, and found all things prepared for the funeral—and a gallant funeral it was; it would have done good to the heart of any of his friends to have ſeen it. When we returned from the church-yard, Mr. Darnley, who was hima

ſelf chief mourner, deſired us all to go back with him to Ben's Cottage, where wine was poured out for us by Mr. Darnley's butler, who is himſelf a very grand gentleman.—When we had drank a glaſs, Mr. Darnley got up, and ſaid—'My friends,' ſays he, 'I hope none of you will have any cauſe to repent the choice made by your kinſman of a truſtee, for the diſtribution of his property, for I cannot look upon his Will in any other light.—Here are twenty of you preſent. Ten grand-children of his brothers, and as many deſcendants from his uncles. To the firſt I have allotted ten guineas each, to the latter five, which diſpoſes of the whole hundred and fifty found in his poſſeſſion—and I hope it is a diviſion with which you will all be ſatisfied.' We all cried out with one voice, that his honour was too good! too generous! that he ſhould at leaſt, keep one half to himſelf. 'God forbid!' ſaid he, 'that I ſhould take a farthing, that my conſcience told me, was the property of another!'—And he looked ſo pleaſed, and ſo good humoured! and we were all ſo aſtounded with delight! for your honour muſt know, that ten guineas to a poor man, is a mighty ſum! Ah! your honour can have no notion what it is, when a man has

been working from hand to mouth, now ſcrambling to get out of debt, and then falling back into poverty—what it is to be at once, as I may ſay, ſet above the world!

The eyes of Emma gliſtened with delight, and the ſweet tint of the opening roſe-bud again mantled over her lovely cheek.—The peaſant continued—

"Well, Sir, we were ſcarcely come to ourſelves, as I may ſay, when Farmer Stubble's cart came to the door, with old Martha Grub, who kept the penny-ſchool on the Green Common, and who broke her leg laſt year on going up to the hen-rooſt. We had every one of us forgotten old Martha, but were all willing to club her ſhare. 'No, no,' ſaid the 'Squire, 'you muſt all keep what you have got, it was my fault, for not being better informed; but Martha ſhall be no loſer, ſaid he; I will give her five guineas out of my own pocket!'—Who would have thought he would have behaved in ſuch a manner?"

"It was indeed acting very handſomely," ſaid Mr. Denbeigh.

"Noble, generous Darnley!" ſaid Emma. "It is juſt what I would have expected from him;"

The old man took his leave.—"And pray," ſays my friend, as ſoon as he was gone, "who is Mr. Darnley? Is it he

whom I well remember breaking down your fences, in following his fox hounds?" "No, no," returned Mr. Denbeigh, "that was the elder brother of this Darnley, who was then, in obedience to the will of his father preparing for the Bar. He was, as you have just heard, too fond of Juſtice, to be very partial to the practice of the Law; and on the death of that elder brother, who broke his neck one morning in hunting, he came down to Darnley-Lodge, where he has ever ſince reſided.

"He was ſoon diſcovered to be a very ſtrange, whimſical ſort of a creature, by the neighbouring 'Squires.—The ſufferings of a poor timorous animal, harraſſed by fatigue, and tortured by the agonizing ſenſations of exceſſive fear, were not neceſſary for his amuſement. He could enjoy much pleaſure in walking over a fine country, without being the butcher of either hare or partridge: and take delight in rambling by the ſide of our river, though his heart never felt the triumph of beholding the dying ſtruggles of a poor trout, or exulted in its writhing agony while tearing the barbed dart from its lacerated entrails. His mind ſought for other objects of gratification. The ſtudy of Mineralogy and Botany, an exquiſite reliſh for the beau-

ties of Nature, refined by an acquaintance with the ſiſter arts of Poetry and Painting, gave ſufficient intereſt to the rural ſcenery, without any aid from the miſery of inoffenſive animals. To the amuſements of elegant Literature, he has added thoſe of Agricultural improvement. He comes here to take my advice about the latter; and on the former, I believe, he comes to conſult Emma, who will give you the beſt account of his taſte."

Emma at that moment very ſuddenly recollected ſomething ſhe had left in her own room, for which ſhe went in great haſte, and the old Gentleman proceeded. "At the time that our acquaintance with Mr. Darnley commenced, Emma was in her ſeventeenth year. He found her mind more cultivated than is common with girls of that age, and took delight in improving her already formed taſte. His converſation was far ſuperior, in point of elegance and information, to that of any perſon ſhe had ever met with: beſides, it muſt be confeſſed, that there is a charm in the manners of a man who has ſeen ſomething of the world, and been accuſtomed to move in the upper circles of life, which is very captivating to a delicate mind. I ſaw the impreſſion that was made upon my poor Emma's, and trembled for the peace of my ſweet child.

I feared, that by acquiring a taſte for that ſort of refinement of ſentiment and manners, which is ſo rarely to be met with in the country, ſhe might injure her future happineſs. I know not if Darnley perceived my uneaſineſs, but he ſoon took an opportunity of ſpeaking to me on the ſubject. He told me, that his affection for my daughter ſhould long ago have led him to make propoſals to me on her account, but that the diſparity of their ages had rendered him anxious to make ſuch an intereſt in her eſteem, as might ſupply the place of that romantic paſſion, which, during the reign of fancy, is deemed eſſential to nuptial happineſs. I approved of his conduct, and told him, that in regard to my daughters, I had laid down a rule to which I had invariably adhered, and that was, never to give my conſent to their entering into any engagement, before they had entered their twentieth year."

" Then you did not intend they ſhould marry Nabobs," ſaid my friend. " Why, we Indians, never think of any thing beyond ſixteen."

" Then you did not think of the bleſſing of mutual happineſs," ſaid his father. " Why not?" returned my friend. " *We* think of happineſs in the poſſeſſion of youth and beauty; and our young wives

think of it in the enjoyment of our fortunes.—Is not this being mutually happy?" "Short-lived happineſs!" rejoined his father, "which is certainly extinguiſhed by ſatiety,, and probably ſucceeded by diſguſt.—The firſt ſight ſympathy of ſouls," continued Mr. Denbeigh, "is laughed at by any well educated girl; but ſuch an union of minds as includes a ſimilarity of taſte and ſentiment;—ſuch a degree of eſteem as is eſſential to mutual confidence, is, in my opinion, abſolutely neceſſary between two people, who are to be bound in partnerſhip for life. And is a girl of ſixteen a proper judge of the qualities neceſſary for ſuch an union?"—"But, if I miſtake not,"—returned my friend "the age of Mr. Darnley very nearly doubles that of my ſiſter." "True," replied the old Gentleman; "but Mr. Darnley does not marry Emma merely on account of her pretty face. Neither does ſhe beſtow her affections on his fortune. The tender friendſhip that already ſubſiſts between them, is cemented by eſteem for real virtues.—If it had been otherwiſe, it is not Mr. Darnley's fortune (though far beyond what a child of mine is by any means entitled to) that ſhould have tempted me to witneſs the ſacrifice of her future peace."

Here the good Gentleman was interrupted by the entrance of this very Mr. Darnley, who had come to pay his compliments to the family, on the arrival of my friend. His noble aſpect and graceful manner, apparently juſtified all that had been ſaid in his favour! and the ſweet bluſhes that ſpread themſelves over the countenance of the fair maiden, on unexpectedly beholding him—told, that the old Gentleman had not been wrong in his conjectures concerning the ſtate of her heart.

But what does Maandaara think of the doctrine of Mr. Denbeigh? Not ſuffer a daughter to enter into the engagement of marriage before ſhe is twenty! —Twenty!—why twenty is old enough for a grandmother—I fear the reaſonings of Mr. Denbeigh would make as few converts in Hindooſtan, as in the Engliſh ſeminaries, where young Ladies are *genteely educated*.

We have juſt returned from ſpending the day with the eldeſt daughter of Mr. Denbeigh.

The company aſſembled were numerous and gay, and the entertainment given them by the Merchant, was at once ſubſtantial and ſplendid.—I ſhould not, however have thought of mentioning it, but for the ſake of one of the gueſts,

whoſe behaviour will give you ſome idea of the manners and converſation of ſuch *people of ſtyle* as are ſuffered to go abroad after the loſs of their ſenſes.—When ſuch people viſit, they make uſe of the company as their *Chubdars**; and always keep them waiting for their appearance ſuch a length of time, as may give them ſufficient opportunity for diſcuſſing their birth, titles, and ſituation. This Lady was accordingly announced, before her appearance, to be the wife of a recruiting officer, and fifteenth couſin to an Iriſh Lord—a circumſtance, of which we might have remained in ignorance, had ſhe arrived at the ſame time with the reſt of the company.

When ſhe entered, the height of the chowry that adorned her head; the length of the train of ſilk which followed her into the room, and which did not diſdain to wipe the feet of the gentlemen; the ſcanty ſize of the veil of modeſty, which covered, or rather which did not cover, her boſom; the quickneſs of her ſtep, the undaunted aſſurance of her mien—all ſpoke the conſciouſneſs of her own ſuperiority. I liſtened to her converſation with the moſt reſpectful at-

* The ſervant whoſe buſineſs it is to proclaim the titles.

tention, till ſhe mentioned a circumſtance, that at once ſtruck me with aſtoniſhment and horror. "London," ſhe ſaid, "was become quite a deſert, not a ſingle being remained in town." "London!" repeated I. "London! that populous city, which was late the reſidence of ſo many hundred thouſand people; is it poſſible, that it can ſo ſuddenly have been rendered deſolate?" "Lard bleſs me," returned the Lady, "every body knows that there is not at this time a ſingle creature in London: and ſo I told the Captain before we went, but he would go, and ſtaid whole ten days; you never knew any thing ſo horrid! Not one creature was to be ſeen."

"Horrid, indeed," repeated I. "Alas! poor Doctor Severan, what, in the general calamity, is become of him?" A ſmile which ſat upon the faces of the company, and a look of compaſſion with which the benevolent Mr. Denbeigh at that moment ſeemed to regard my informer, made me ſuſpect her of inſanity, and ſhe, indeed, ſaid enough afterwards fully to confirm my ſuſpicion.

Poor thing! ſhe was ſo incapable of concealing her misfortune—that ſhe ſeemed to pique herſelf on having fainted at the ſight of a red gown in the month of July, a convincing proof that

ſhe was not then in the poſſeſſion of her underſtanding.—The derangement of her faculties, may, perhaps, be accounted for from the many *frights* and *ſhocks* ſhe has met with in a country town, where her huſband is unfortunately quartered.

" The *frights*," ſhe ſaid, " came to viſit her, and ſome of their heads were ſo *hideous*, that ſhe thought ſhe would have died at the ſight." No wonder that ſuch a circumſtance ſhould have produced fatal effects upon a feeble mind. Like moſt people who labour under this ſort of delirium, ſhe was altogether unconſcious of her unhappy ſituation, and really ſeemed to enjoy a fancied pre-eminence over the daughters of Mr. Denbeigh, and many other females of ſound mind, who were aſſembled upon this occaſion. " Alas! poor lady," ſaid I to myſelf, " how pitiable is thy ſituation! How much more would it have been to thy advantage, to have poſſeſſed one grain of the good ſenſe of theſe amiable females, whom thy folly holds in ſuch deriſion, than to have been couſin to all the Lords in Chriſtendom! Had not thy malady brought blindneſs to thine eyes, thou mighteſt, doubtleſs, have beheld in the ſtreets of London, thouſands, and ten thouſands of thy ſuperiors in the ſcale of human excellence!"—But

thus it is, that the duſt of folly which is ſhaken into the eyes by the hand of affectation, produces the falſe perception of objects.

May we have our eyes enlightened by the * Collyrium of judgment—ſo ſhall we be able to obſerve ourſelves in the Mirror of Truth!

I have had the unexpected ſatisfaction of beholding the ſiſter of my firſt Engliſh friend. Yes, Maandaara, Charlotte Percy is now the gueſt of Mr. Denbeigh, and you may judge how much ſuch a circumſtance has augmented the pleaſure of Zaarmilla.

I did not till lately diſcover, that Morley-farm was in the neighbourhood of Violet-dale, and not many hours elapſed after the diſcovery, till, in company with Denbeigh and his ſiſter Emma, I went to viſit the late reſidence of the benevolent old man, whoſe character is ſtill ſpoken of in the neighbourhood in terms of reſpect, gratitude, and affection. The weather was ſerene and temperate, ſuch as, at Almora, we frequently enjoy in the depth of winter; it was what is

* Collyrium. Crude Antimony, and ſometimes Lead ore, ground to an impalpable powder, which the people of India put into their eyes, by means of a poliſhed wire. They fancy it clears the ſight and encreaſes the luſtre of the eye.

here called a fine autumnal morning. The trees which were ſo lately clothed in the livery of the Muſſulman Prophet, have now aſſumed a greater variety of colouring—while ſome have had their green coats changed into the ſober tint of the cinnamon: and others have taken the tawny hue of the orange. The leaves of many, which like ungracious children, had forſaken their parent ſtem, ruſtled in our path. Of all the vocal inhabitants of the woods, one little bird alone, like the faithful friend, who reſerves his ſervices for the hour of adverſity, ſitting on the half-ſtripped boughs, raiſed the ſoft note of conſolation to the deſerted grove.

Emma, who was our conductreſs, ſaid ſhe would take us by the private road, which had been a few years ago made by Mr. Morley and her father, to facilitate the intercourſe of their families. We ſoon arrived where the wooden bridge had ſtood; but, alas! it was now no longer paſſable. A few of its planks half floated on the ſtream—the reſt had been carried away by the farmer, to make up a breach in the fence. "Ah!" ſaid Emma, "could poor Mr. Morley now ſee that bridge!—but do not mention it to my father. I know it would vex him

to hear of it." We proceeded on another road, and at the diſtance of a few paces from the houſe, we met with a ſecond diſappointment. Attempting to open a ſmall gate that led to the front door of the houſe, a little boy came out to tell us that it had been nailed up, and that we muſt go through the yard where the cattle were feeding.

Emma begged we might proceed no farther, and we were about to comply with her requeſt, when the wife of the perſon who now rents the farm came to us. "Ah! how glad Miſs Percy will be to ſee you Miſs!" cried ſhe. "I did not think that my ſon could have been back from the Dale ſo ſoon."

"Miſs Percy!" ſaid Emma. "What of Miſs Percy? When did you hear of her?"

"Did you not know that ſhe came here yeſterday?" returned the woman. "She ſent a letter to let you know that ſhe intended going over to the Dale to-night."

"Sent a letter! returned Emma. Charlotte uſed not to be ſo ceremonious."

"Indeed ſhe is not what ſhe uſed to be," returned the farmer's wife "She is ſo melancholy, that I never ſaw the like. Soon after ſhe came yeſterday evening,

ſhe went out to the garden, and, would you believe it? the ſight of the potatoes my huſband planted in the place my old maſter uſed to call his Velvet Walk, and which he uſed to have mown every week (though the graſs was good for nothing, to be ſure, but to be ſwept away as if it had been rubbiſh) and where he uſed to ſit of an evening in the queer-looking chair, that now, when it is turned upſide down, does ſo well for a hay-rack for the young calves; would you believe it? her eyes filled with tears at the very ſight of it. Now what could make any one cry at the ſight of a good crop of potatoes, is more than I can imagine. But, ſays my huſband, don't you ſee that it is being ſo very lonely that makes Miſs ſo melancholy? So I went to her, and though ſhe ſaid ſhe liked to be lonely, I would not leave her to herſelf the whole evening."

"Your company would be a great relief to her ſpirits, to be ſure," ſaid Denbeigh.

"Yes, for certain," returned the good woman; "though ſhe took on a little ſtill. And when ſhe went into the paddock, where the little poney that Mr. Morley uſed to ride about the farm now runs, La! ſee Miſs, ſays I, if there is not your uncle's poney, I dare to ſay it knows you. She held out her hand, and called it by its

name, and, would you believe it? it no ſooner heard her voice, than it came ſcampering up.—Poor Mopſy, ſaid ſhe, as ſhe ſtroaked its ears, and again the tears came into her eyes. She turned away, but the beaſt ſtill followed her, neighing, till we came to the gate. She then ſo begged me to leave her for a few minutes, that I went on the other ſide of the hedge, and ſaw her go back to poor Mopſy, and laying her hand upon its head, as it held it out for her to ſtroak—ſhe burſt into tears. Dear heart, ſays I, Miſs, don't take on ſo; my huſband will buy you a ſurer-footed beaſt than Mopſy, at any market in the country, for five pounds.

"Poor Charlotte!" ſaid Emma: "but why did ſhe expoſe herſelf to this torture?" The good woman ſtared at Emma, who declined liſtening to any more of her converſation; but demanding which way her couſin had walked, ſhe haſtily requeſted us to follow.

"How nicely this gravel walk uſed to be kept!" ſaid Emma (as we walked along "and ſee how it is now deſtroyed. Theſe ſhrubs too, ſo broken down by the cattle, how the good old Mr. Morley uſed to delight himſelf in taking care of them! He is gone! and, alas! how quickly are the favourite objects of his at-

tention likely to periſh!—But the remembrance of his virtues ſhall not thus fall into oblivion.—No!" continued the lovely moraliſt: "the trees he has planted may be cut down by ſordid avarice; and the hand of brutiſh ſtupidity may root out the flowers of his garden; but his deeds of benevolence and charity ſhall be held in everlaſting remembrance!"

We were now arrived at the gate of a meadow, which was almoſt encircled by the ſtream. A narrow path winded through the plantation of young trees that ornamented its banks.—At the root of one of theſe trees, I perceived a ſmall bright object glittering in the rays of the ſun. I approached it, and found ſome leaves of ivory, faſtened by a ſilver claſp, which on touching it, flew open, and diſcovered the hand writing of Miſs Percy. "It is "Charlotte's tablets," cried Emma. "It was in theſe ſhe uſed to ſketch the effuſions of her fancy, on any ſubject that occured.—It is ſtill ſo," continued ſhe, turning over the leaves. "Here is ſome poetry—ſhe cannot think it any breach of faith to read it." "Read it then," ſaid her brother.

She complied, and read as follows—

Why, ſhades of Morley! will you not impart
Some conſolation to my grief-worn mind?
'Mid your delightful ſcenes, my ſinking heart
Had hoped the ſweets of wonted peace to find.

Dear ſcenes of ſweet content, and careleſs eaſe,
Where in unchanging bliſs the ſeaſons roll'd,
Where Winter's ſtorm, or Summer's genial breeze,
Could ſome peculiar beauty ſtill unfold.

The charmer Hope then perch'd on every bough,
And ſung of Friendſhip true, and Love ſincere;
While Fancy twin'd her wreath round youth's fair brow,
And Mem'ry's annals mark'd no tranſient tear.

But now—the charmer Hope is heard no more!
Gone are my youth's lov'd friends;—for ever gone!
The dear deluſive dreams of bliſs are o'er,
And all fair Fancy's airy train is flown!

Sad Mem'ry now muſt theſe lov'd haunts invade
With the dark forms of many a heart-felt grief,
With boſom'd ſorrows, ſilent as this ſhade,
Sorrows from lenient Time that ſcorn relief.

As to each well known object Mem'ry clings,
She bids the tear of deep regret to flow;
To every former ſcene of bliſs ſhe brings
The throb of anguiſh, and the ſigh of Woe.

As ſhe retraces every bliſsful hour,
Here ſpent with cheerful Hope, and youthful joy,
Hope loſt! Joy gone for ever;———
* * * * * * * * * * * * *

The tears which had fallen on the remaining lines had rendered them totally illegible. Thoſe which ſuffuſed the blue eyes of the gentle Emma, ſtopt her utter-

ance, ſhe haſtily put the tablets in her pocket—and we proceeded in ſilence.

In a ſpot that was peculiarly ſheltered by a row of beeches, whoſe leaves have now aſſumed the colour of the dried cinnamon, ſtood the remains of an arbour, which had once been covered with the moſt beautiful creepers this ungenial climate can produce, but which unſupported now fell upon the ground: no bad emblem of the mind of their former miſtreſs, who ſat at the entrance of the arbour, on the trunk of a fallen tree. Her countenance wore the traces of melancholy, but the manner in which ſhe received the ſalutations of my friends, ſhewed that her heart was ſtill capable of the moſt animated affection. Me too ſhe received with kindneſs, though the ideas aſſociated with my appearance gave a perceptible emotion to her already agitated ſpirits. She made an effort to baniſh the melancholy ideas which had of late been ſo familiar to her mind; and having ſatisfied Emma as to the reaſons that induced her to ſtop at Morley-farm, ſhe cheerfully acquieſced in her propoſal of returning with us to Violet-dale, where ſhe was received with the cordial welcome of ſincere affection; and where,

in the happineſs of her friends, her own ſorrows appear to be forgotten.

In this temple of domeſtic bliſs, the flight of time has been ſo imperceptible, that a whole week, which has elapſed ſince I laid down my pen, appears but as a day.

We know that one of the fourteen precious things which were produced in the churning of the ocean, was a learned phyſician: but which of the ſages of the tribe of Vaidya ever contrived a remedy of ſuch approved efficacy, as the converſation of a faithful and judicious friend?

Such a one has Miſs Percy experienced in the father of Denbeigh. He has already convinced her that the indulgence of melancholy, inſtead of being an amiable weakneſs, rather deſerving of admiration than cenſure, is, in reality, equally ſelfiſh and ſinful.—It is, he ſays, the height of ingratitude to the Giver of all good, peeviſhly to refuſe the enjoyment of the many bleſſings that are left us, becauſe we are deprived of a few, which were in their very natures periſhable.—"But, alas!" replied Miſs Percy, "what is left to thoſe whoſe earlieſt and deareſt friends have been ſnatched from them by the hand of death?"

"Much is left to all," replied Mr. Denbeigh. "No one, who enjoys the

bleſſings of health, and a peaceful conſcience, can, without ingratitude repine. The proper diſcharge of the duties of life is a ſource of happineſs to every well regulated mind."

"But how circumſcribed are the limits of thoſe duties to a female, who has no longer any parent to attend on: no family to manage: no fortune to beſtow in deeds of charity: and who has it little in her power to be uſeful, even to a friend?"

"And is the gift of reaſon then nothing?" retorted Mr. Denbeigh. "And are the powers of the mind to lie dormant, becauſe, forſooth, you have not now the management of a family: or the exerciſe of the benevolent affections to be given up, becauſe you have not a fortune to build alms-houſes? Theſe are the meer ſubterfuges of indolence. Believe me, my dear Charlotte, that whoever ſeriouſly reſolves not to ſuffer any opportunity of benefiting a fellow-creature to paſs unemployed, will find, that the power of doing good is not circumſcribed within very narrow limits.

"Why, (let me aſk you farther) ſhould your mind, cultivated as it has been by education, and improved by liſtening to the converſation of the enlightened and judicious; why ſhould it not exert its

powers, not only for your own entertainment, but for the inſtruction, or innocent amuſement of others?"

"Ah! Sir," returned Charlotte, "you know how female writers are looked down upon. The women fear, and hate; the men ridicule, and diſlike them."

"This may be the caſe with the mere mob, who receive every prejudice upon truſt," rejoined Mr. Denbeigh; "but if the ſimplicity of your character remains unchanged—if the virtues of your heart receive no alloy from the vanity of authorſhip; truſt me, my dear Charlotte, you will not be the leſs dear to any friend that is deſerving of your love, for having employed your leiſure hours in a way that is both innocent and rational."

Thus did this venerable old man perſuade Miſs Percy to reconcile her mind to the evils of her deſtiny, and, by the exertion of activity, to ſeek the road to contentment. Nor has his attention been confined to her. Me alſo, he has honoured with much of his inſtructive converſation. He has been particularly ſolicitous to know my opinions concerning all that I have ſeen in England; and expecting to reap advantage from his obſervations, I have put into his hands a copy of all my letters to you. Theſe it

was eaſy for me to give in Engliſh; it having been my cuſtom to write down ſuch converſations as I intended to recite to you, in that language, and after having given it to ſome Engliſh friend to tranſlate, have from the corrected copy made tranſlations intended for your uſe.

Mr. Denbeigh was much entertained with my account of the philoſophers, but ſaid, "if it was known in England, people would think that I intended to turn philoſophy itſelf into ridicule." Thus it is that the deſigns of authors are miſtaken! Perhaps this is not the only paſſage in my letters that might, to an Engliſh reader, appear to be abſurd.—Happily they will never be expoſed to any eye, ſave that of my friend.—It is therefore ſufficient if to him they convey a picture of the truth, ſuch as it appears to the mind of Zaarmilla.

I have already hinted my aſtoniſhment at the number of new books that are every year produced in England; but now that I know what theſe books have to encounter, before they fight their way into the world, my aſtoniſhment is increaſed tenfold! many and various are the evils which theſe poor adventurers have to encounter. Beſides the ſmarting, though ſuperficial wounds, which they may expect

to receive from the ſmall-ſhot of the ladies and gentlemen, *genteely educated*; who call every thing *ſtupid* that is beyond the limits of their ſlender comprehenſions, they have to ſuſtain the *heavy* blows of thoſe who cut down every thing as *nonſenſe*, that ſwerves from the beaten track over which they have been accuſtomed to trot. Should they be endowed with ſufficient ſtrength to ſurvive the attack of both theſe adverſaries, they have ſtill to paſs before the formidable phalanx of Reviewers, each of whom, like the mighty Carticeya*, brandiſhes in his hundred arms a hundred inſtruments of deſtruction. Theſe terrible Genii are ſaid to judge of books by the ſmell, and when that has happened to be offenſive to their noſtrils, have been known, by one well-aimed dart, to transfix an unfortunate book to the ſhelves of the bookſellers' ſhops for ever. But with the powerful is found mercy. Inſtead of the dread weapons of war, theſe imitators of the ſons of the Mountain-born Goddeſs, ſometimes condeſcend gently to tickle the trembling ad-

* The Hindoo God of War. He is repreſented with ſix faces, and a number of hands, in each of which he brandiſhes a weapon. He rides upon a peacock, and is uſually found in company with his Mother Parvati, or the Mountain Goddeſs, one of the characters of the conſort of Seeva. See Aſiatic Reſearches, vol. ii.

venturer with a feather plucked from the plumage of the Peacock.

Ah! if ever a friend of Zaarmilla's ventures to ſend forth a book into the world, may it find theſe terrible Reviewers in this favourable mood! May its perfume be pleaſing to their noſtrils, and its form find favour in their ſight!!

I have juſt received a letter from my friend Severan, it contains the deſirable information, that a ſhip will in a few weeks ſail for India—the commander of which, is his particular friend. In it I ſhall take my paſſage—and if the powerful Varuna is favourable to my prayers, ſhall, in the progreſs of a few returning moons, again behold the bleſſed ſhores of Hindooſtan. O thought replete with extacy! How does the boſom of *Z*aarmilla pant, for the period of thy realization!—Yet ſhall I not purchaſe that felicity, without having paid the debt of Anguiſh, in many a tear; before my eyes can be ſolaced by beholding the companions of my youth, they muſt have been moiſtened with the ſorrow of an eternal ſeparation from every Engliſh friend.

From this amiable family, from the worthy Denbeigh, and the excellent Severan, I ſhall have been parted for ever.—

But the remembrance of their virtues ſhall be the companions of my life; and the idea of their happineſs ſhall ſolace every hour of my exiſtence.

Nothing can equal the delight of my friend Severan, at the ſucceſs of his experiment; which has opened a new field for diſcovery, of which he will not be ſlow to take poſſeſſion. It is a peculiar advantage attendant upon ſcience, that the gratification it affords is not more delightful to the individual, than beneficial to ſociety; and it is this conſideration that enhances every enjoyment of the ſcientific philoſopher.

I cannot help thinking, that this ſort of philoſophy is more favourable to the happineſs of its votaries, than that ſort profeſſed at Ardent-Hall; but this may be owing to the advantages enjoyed by the former, of a happier method of conducting their experiments. It certainly does not ariſe in the latter from any want of zeal, or from a backwardneſs to repeat experiments, that have already been found unſucceſsful. As a proof of this, my friend Severan informs me, that Mr. Axiom, has perſuaded Miſs Ardent to accompany him to the Continent, on an experiment of *abſtract principle*, which, he ſays—" ſhould put a learned female

above the cenſure of the world." My friend ſeems to doubt whether the reſult of this experiment, will bring peace to the poor Lady's boſom; and adds, "that it would be no leſs ſurpriſing, to ſee the flame of the taper brighten, on being plunged into mephitic air, than that a female, who bids defiance to modeſty and decorum, ſhould preſerve her honour and her peace."

Miſs Ardent has reſigned her charge of the younger daughter of Sir Caprice, to Lady Grey. The eldeſt daughter of the Baronet, the Novel-reading Julia, has it ſeems, ſuffered much from the unexpected metamorphoſis of a charming ſwain; who, ſoon after he had introduced himſelf to her acquaintance, as a hero of exalted ſentiment and tender ſenſibility, was unfortunately recognized by certain ſagacious men, from a place called Bow-ſtreet to be one of the tribe of Swindlers—the diſcovery gave ſuch a ſhock to the nerves of the young Lady, that ſhe has been ordered to a place called Bath, for the recovery of her health. Thither her father and mother have accompanied her; and there the former, at the inſtigation of a teacher of a ſect called Methodiſts, has renounced the poojah of Syſtem; and, inſtead of building

a houſe for ſparrows to make honey, he now intends to erect a church, for the edification of the ſaints. Thus doth one folly ſucceed to another, in the breaſt of him who is void of all permanent principle!—May the mind of Maandaara be furniſhed by Ganeſa with the protecting ſhield of judgment, and preſerved from the evils of inſtability!

As this letter will be ſent by a ſmall veſſel called a packet, which carries diſpatches from this government to the council of Calcutta, it will probably reach the happy region of Almora ſome weeks before thy friend.

I anticipate the comments which thou wilt make upon its contents. Thou wilt obſerve, that to extend our knowledge of the world, is but to become acquainted with new modes of pride, vanity, and folly. Thou wilt perceive that in Europe, as in Aſia, an affected ſingularity often paſſes for ſuperior wiſdom; bold aſſertion for truth; and fickly faſtidiouſneſs for true delicacy of ſentiment. Thou wilt ſee that the paſſions of men are every where the ſame; and that the variety made by the Idol of Doctor Sceptic (exiſting circumſtances) is not in the paſſions themſelves, but in the complexion of the objects which excite them. Thou wilt remark, that though vice and

folly have the appearance of being every where predominant, that it is only the ſuperficial obſerver, who will from thence infer the non-exiſtence of Wiſdom and Virtue. Theſe have been traced by Maandaara to the boſom of retirement, where he will have obſerved them ſcattering the ſweet bloſſoms of domeſtic peace: and though the torch of vanity glares not on their dwelling, and the trump of fame ſounds not at their approach, he will nevertheleſs have remarked with pleaſure the extent of their ſilent reign, and, with Zaarmilla, will pity the man who can form a doubt of their exiſtence.

Of the various religions of the Engliſh, I have given you a full and diſtinct account. You will perceive by it, that notwithſtanding the progreſs of philoſophy, and the report of Sheermaal, that that of Chriſtianity is not *yet entirely extinct*; but that, like Virtue and Wiſdom, it has ſtill ſome adherents, in the retired ſcenes of life. You will, perhaps, not have been able to diſcover how the practices enjoined by its precepts can be injurious to ſociety; and inclined to think, that the love of a Being of infinite wiſdom and goodneſs, and ſuch a government of the paſſions, as enables a man to love his neighbour as himſelf, can do no great harm to the world.—Obnoxi-

ous as the precepts which command purity of heart, unfeigned humility, ſanctity of morals, and ſimplicity of manners; may be to the philoſopher; you will conclude, that they have, in reality, been found as little detrimental to the repoſe of the individual, as the expectation of everlaſting felicity has been to his happineſs. I am ſorry that the want of ſucceſs attending the experiments of the worſhippers of Syſtem, preſents me with nothing to oppoſe to your concluſions better than aſſertion: but if you have half the complaiſance of the people of England, you will think that ought to be ſufficient to overturn the dictates of common ſenſe, though confirmed by the experience of ages!—Such faith do theſe good people put in the aſſertions of philoſophers.

I am called from my pen to witneſs a ceremony called Signing the Settlements, which is preliminary to the marriage of Mr. Darnley and the blooming Emma. The day after to-morrow is fixed for their nuptials, and on the day following, the amiable bride departs with her huſband, loaded with paternal bleſſings. Though every thing is to be conducted in common form, and exactly in conformity to Chriſtian prejudices, I do not know but this gentle and unaſſuming girl may have as

great a chance for happineſs, as if ſhe had gone off with her lover on an experiment of *abſtract principle.*

" May the conduct of thoſe who act " well, afford pleaſure to the mind! May " you, ye good, find friends in this world! " May virtue be for ever to be found!"

In reading the letters of a friend, may the goodneſs of his intention be put in the balance with his errors; and where the former is found predominant, may the latter be conſigned to oblivion! What can I ſay more.

FINIS.

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